

[*From a Photograph by Adams and Stillard.*]

C. G. Gordon.

GORDON ANECDOTES

A SKETCH OF THE CAREER, WITH ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE CHARACTER OF

CHARLES GEORGE GORDON, R.E.

BY

DR. MACAULAY

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AND

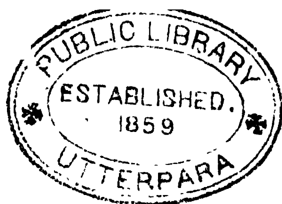
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PREFACE.

IT is to be hoped that a complete biography of General Gordon will in due time be given to the world. The words of Mr. Gladstone, in the eloquent and touching speech in which he referred to the loss of 'this hero among heroes,' express what many must feel:—'Such is the man we have lost, a loss great indeed; but he is not all lost, for such examples are fruitful in the future, and I trust there will grow from the contemplation of that character and those deeds other men who in future time may emulate his noble and most Christian example.'

Many popular memoirs of Gordon have already appeared, but most of them are brief and fragmentary, or they relate only to certain parts of his busy and varied life. One volume which professes to have special authority for its publication is that entitled *Colonel Gordon in Central Africa*, edited by George Birkbeck Hill, D.C.L., for the preparation of which original letters and documents were placed at his disposal by the family. To this work, published in 1881, and to *The Ever Victorious Army*, by Andrew Wilson, published in 1868, giving details

of the campaigns in China, Mr. Egmont Hake acknowledges his obligation in his volume entitled *The Story of Chinese Gordon*, of which the last edition appeared in 1884. A continuation of the story has since appeared. Mr. Hake, a kinsman of Gordon, has given some incidents of Gordon's early life not in the previous works, and his book is throughout written in a generous and sympathetic tone.

Since the lamented death of Gordon, a short biographical sketch has appeared by the Rev. Reginald Barnes and Major C. E. Brown. Mr. Barnes, who became acquainted with General Gordon at Lausanne in 1880, and who was his correspondent in after years, edited the posthumous book, *Reflections in Palestine*. Of his biographical sketch, the main feature is the account of 'the inward life' of Gordon in his later years. An account of *Gordon's Chinese Campaigns* has been given by Samuel Mossman, who was at that time editor of the *North China Herald* at Shanghai.

Of minor memoirs, one of the most popular is that by Archibald Forbes, the well-known 'war correspondent,' and a briefer tract by Charles H. Allen, Secretary of the Anti-Slavery Society, both of whom refer to the volumes of Wilson, Hake, and Hill as the main sources of their materials.

Other works have followed, especially *The Life and Work of General Gordon at Gravesend*, by W. E. Lilley, who was a clerk in the Royal Engineer Department, and a useful helper in the benevolent works which made Gordon so beloved

in that district. A personal recollection of the same period of his life has been contributed by Mr. Arthur Stannard, to *The Nineteenth Century*, giving incidents of Gordon's professional work at Gravesend. A still more valuable contribution is a paper, in the *Fortnightly Review* of January, 1887, by Gordon's old comrade and friend, Lieutenant-General Sir Gerald Graham.

The most important of all the materials for a biography are the *Journals* of Gordon himself during the siege of Khartoum (Kegan Paul & Co). We have here a wonderful record of courage, resource, and endurance, which never can be read without emotion, and bitter regret that such a man should have been lost in such a way. In a volume subsequently published, Sir Henry Gordon records many events of his brother's former services.

Besides the family papers and the personal journals and letters, an immense mass of materials exists in the despatches, reports, and published documents from Gordon's own pen. From these various sources the editor of the present little volume has gathered a number of facts which present a brief outline of Gordon's remarkable career, together with anecdotes illustrating his great and noble character.

While the story of Gordon's life is its own best monument, it was natural that the feelings of his countrymen should find expression in visible memorials. The monument in St. Paul's Cathedral was placed there by order of Parliament, and at the expense of the nation. Many other memorials

have been provided by the voluntary subscriptions of those who admired his character and mourned his loss. The most important of these is the Gordon Home; for training boys of the class in whose welfare he took deep personal interest. It was first located at Fort Wallington, Portsmouth, but is to have its permanent site at Bagshot Heath, where it is hoped that provision will be made for the training of five hundred boys, for the military and civil service of the State: a scheme which would have delighted Gordon's heart.

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GORDON ANECDOTES.



Black Thursday, February 5, 1885.—No one who was in London on February 5, 1885, can ever forget the day. The newspapers of the morning had announced no special tidings, and men went forth to their work and business as usual. Early in the forenoon the startling announcement came to every eye and ear: FALL OF KHARTOUM—FATE OF GORDON.

The news had reached the War Office the night

before, but was not communicated to the public through the press till after the usual time of publishing the morning papers. So the announcement came with the greater suddenness and surprise. Few could at once realise or believe it. Public hope and expectation had for days before been raised to the highest pitch. The relieving army under Sir Herbert Stewart had fought its way, not without severe loss, but with victorious advance, across the Bayuda desert, and on reaching the Nile, found some of Gordon's steamers awaiting them. The long suspense was nearly over, and the gallant efforts of Lord Wolseley's expedition were now on the eve of being crowned with success. Sir Charles Wilson, with a few chosen men, was starting for Khartoum, and 'to-morrow the lonely and weary hero will joyfully grasp the hand of an Englishman.' These words were telegraphed by a correspondent; and to the nation, elated with hope, came the next sad telegram announcing the fall of Khartoum and the death of Gordon!

The tidings were soon flashed from London throughout the kingdom, and everywhere caused the utmost surprise and excitement, followed by depression and gloom. Men talked of the event with bated breath. Some hoped against hope, as if the news were incredible. But the worst was all too true. We can remember the arrival and the announcement of disastrous tidings of many kinds, and at various seasons of national anxiety, but we never knew a time when such a gloom seemed to rest on the public life of the nation as on that

'Black Thursday.' The shock was all the greater as it came, as one expressed it, like a thunderbolt out of the clear sky! Hope had been raised so high, that the disappointment and grief were felt beyond measure. It was not the fall of Khartoum, but the fate of Gordon, that filled all hearts with anxiety and with sorrow. And why?

Public Grief at Gordon's Loss.—Until a very recent time the name of General Gordon had been comparatively unknown to the great public. There was a vague knowledge of his having performed some extraordinary service in his early life in China, and in later years he had succeeded Sir Samuel Baker as Governor of the Soudan. His best years had been spent in the service of foreign powers, and in regions of the world in which no great popular interest was felt by the mass of his countrymen. By the few who had known and watched his career, he was honoured as a brave soldier and a remarkable man; and the officers of his own corps, The Royal Engineers, were proud of their comrade, 'Chinese Gordon' and 'Gordon Pasha.' But his name had not often been in the mouth of the people, and when the voice of public opinion gradually grew in volume, and called for him to be sent to face the rising dangers in Egypt, nine out of ten, or even ninety-nine out of every hundred, might have asked, Who is Gordon? Certainly the War Office did not appreciate the character of an officer who had been rarely employed, nor did the Government fully know the value of a public servant whom

history will honour as one of the greatest Englishmen of his time.

But in the end of his life the noble nature and heroic spirit of the man shone forth with a glory that could not be hid. For more than a year this representative of England and England's army had, at first with one or two comrades, but latterly alone, been lifted up in the sight of the whole world, and the eyes, not of Englishmen only, but of all civilised nations, had been turned to him with admiration and sympathy. It was almost with surprise that England awoke to the sense that it had a hero of the grandest old type left to it—a man whose heroic life had been strangely hidden, but which had only to be seen to make all his countrymen proud of him. And all this was discovered too late!—too late for his country, though not for his own honour or fame.

The *Times*, after the tidings of his death came, thus expressed what was the feeling of the nation, and what will be the verdict of history :—

'The marvellous career is now ended. The life is over. At the moment when relief was at hand, treachery did that which force could not do, and Gordon, if we are to believe the too probable story, fell with the fall of Khartoum. All is over except his influence, his example, his name. Probably the grief and admiration of his country will find expression in some great material monument; and the richest and the noblest that the sculptor's art could produce would be well deserved. But "the labour of an age in pilèd

stones" is not necessary to keep alive the memory of one whose life was its own best monument. That life has done much for this generation. It has served conspicuously to remind us that the age of chivalry is not dead; that chivalry in the highest sense is rare, indeed, but that its influence is as great and as far-reaching as of old. It has proved, too, that the English race is in no sense degenerate—if that needed to be proved to a people which, among much that is sad and sordid, yet sees all around it the daily acts of heroism that its best men and women are performing. Gordon's life and death bear bright and noble witness that even in a materialistic age the ideals of faith, duty, and enthusiasm are living forces still.

'If we cannot but deeply mourn the untimely end of so much genius and so much devotion, it is some consolation to feel that Gordon's heroic death has lifted him to a height of glory which renders him the most conspicuous Englishman of our time.'

Another writer uses language equally eulogistic, and expresses the belief that Gordon's name will not only be one of the most notable in the annals of England, but that the world will be the better for his having lived:

'There is no one in England to-day who does not feel a sense of personal loss. To the mind of the country, General Gordon represented the prototype of all that was simple and true, strong and noble. Comparatively few know the full

history of his unequalled career. The marvellous genius and self-contained power displayed in the suppression of the Taeping rebellion were not widely understood. Yet General Gordon had come to mean for us the incarnation of all the qualities which have made England great; while it was thoroughly realised that, in an age when self-interest is only too powerful a motive of action, he at least lived and worked for duty alone. All could understand the gallant spirit which led him cheerfully to face unparalleled difficulties and dangers in the Soudan; while the long and brilliant defence of Khartoum has been for months vividly present to the imagination of every Englishman. If General Gordon has gone from us, he leaves behind him a name that cannot die, and a standard of simple unselfish devotion to duty which will never perish; while not England alone, but the whole civilised world, will have distinctly benefited by his life and example.'

Tributes in Parliament.—When the subject came to be mentioned in Parliament, there was but one voice of regret at his loss and of admiration of his character.

Earl Granville, representing the British Government in the House of Peers, on the opening night of Parliament, February 19, 1885, made touching reference to the loss of the lamented Gordon. He spoke of him as 'that heroic soldier, that great Englishman, in whom genius and virtue and disinterestedness were combined to an extraor-

dinary degree, and whose struggles and whose death have excited an enthusiastic sympathy and a unanimous regret.'

The Marquis of Salisbury, the leader of the Opposition, echoed the sentiment, and spoke of 'the sympathy and deep regret with which we have all of us heard of the fall of our Christian hero.'

Similar tributes of honour were paid in the House of Commons. Let the words of Mr. Gladstone suffice to express what was, in earnest and eloquent words, uttered by the leaders of all parties in the State:—'The right hon. gentleman (Sir Stafford Northcote) has dwelt with the utmost propriety and the utmost feeling on the loss which the country has sustained in the death of General Gordon. He stated that General Gordon had devoted his life, and all that makes life valuable, to his sovereign and to his country. Sir, he might have enlarged that eulogium, for the life of General Gordon was not limited even to those great objects. It was devoted to his sovereign, to his country, and likewise to the world. General Gordon's sympathies were not limited by race, or colour, or religion. In point of fact, he seems to have deemed it his special honour to devote his energies and to risk his existence on behalf of those with whom he had no other tie than that of human sympathy. General Gordon was a hero, and permit me to say he was still more—he was a hero among heroes. For there have been men who have obtained and deserved the praise of

heroism, whose heroism was manifested on the field of battle or in other conflicts, and who, when examined in the tenour of their personal lives, were not altogether blameless; but if you take the case of this man, pursue him into privacy, investigate his heart and his mind, and you will find that he proposed to himself not any ideal of wealth and power, or even fame, but to do good was the object he proposed to himself in his whole life, and on that one object it was his one desire to spend his existence.'

Birth, Parentage, and Early Home Life.—Charles George Gordon was born at Woolwich, January 28, 1833. His father, the late Lieutenant-General Henry William Gordon, of the Royal Artillery, drew up a record of the family history, which contains some interesting particulars. One of his ancestors was a general in the army of Peter the Great of Russia, who had not a few Scotchmen of distinguished name in his service. The grandfather of Henry William Gordon, David Gordon, served under Sir John Cope, in the rebellion of 1745, in Lascelles' regiment (late the 47th), and was taken prisoner at Prestonpans. A kinsman, Sir William Gordon, of Park, fought on the same field under the Pretender. David was released on parole, through the special intervention of the Duke of Cumberland, whom he had previously known, and who had some years before stood sponsor for his son, named after the Duke, William Augustus. After Culloden, David and his son went to North

America, where he died, at Halifax, in 1752. The son, William Augustus, entered the British army, and served successively in the 40th, 72nd, and 11th Regiments. He saw a good deal of service, in the New as well as the Old World—was with Wolfe on the Plains of Abraham, and witnessed the capture of Quebec and the conquest of Canada. He had three sons, all in the army: one in the 95th Regiment, the second in the Engineers, and the third, Henry William, born in 1786 (the father of Charles George Gordon), in the Artillery. The father was every inch a soldier, in figure, manner, and spirit. He had decision of character almost to severity, but was a man of great warmth of feeling and geniality of nature. He knew no higher ambition than that of being a British officer, and he manifested this preference in an amusing way by never evincing any pleasure on hearing of the extraordinary exploits and honours of his son Charles in foreign service. Of his sons, three who grew to manhood were in the British army, only one of them—the eldest, Sir Henry Gordon, K.C.B., surviving, and editing the memoir of his brother, Charles.

From the paternal side it will thus be seen that Charles Gordon sprang from a family of soldiers, himself having raised the name of his house and his clan to a higher reputation than it ever bore.

On his mother's side Gordon's origin was scarcely less remarkable. Elizabeth Enderby was daughter of a merchant as distinguished in his way, and of a class of men to which England owes her greatness as much as to the exploits of her navy and army.

Samuel Enderby bore a name as well known in the British mercantile world as any merchant prince of the last century. He had ships in every clime and on every sea. It was he who chiefly opened the South Pacific to commerce after the exploring voyages of Captain Cook. But for the Enderby whaling fleet the vast regions of Australasia might have long remained unpeopled by Europeans. In one of his whalers the first batch of English convicts was despatched to Botany Bay, and his ships were afterwards often filled with adventurous colonists. By the East India Company's charter, no private merchants could send their ships beyond the Cape of Good Hope without special licence; but Enderby's ships were favoured, and traded in the Chinese and Japanese waters. They had a busy trade also with the colonies of North America before the War of Independence; and it was one of his ships that carried the cargo of tea, the emptying of which into Boston Harbour was the signal for open rebellion. The name of Enderby was thus associated with many historical events of his time.

Gordon's Mother.—Elizabeth Enderby, the mother of Charles Gordon, was a woman of great strength and sweetness of character. She had a large family, five sons and six daughters, reared by her with wise and tender care. Industrious, sensible, cheerful under many trials and anxieties, she was a good wife, a good mother, and a good woman in every best

sense of the word. Attentive to every home duty, she was also ever busy in deeds of kindness and beneficence. The praise and properties of the model woman in the Book of Proverbs could be well applied to her—'She openeth her mouth with wisdom, and in her tongue is the law of kindness. Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her.' When Mr. Pearson, a missionary on his way to Central Africa, was talking to General Gordon at Khartoum in 1878, he happened to say he had been writing to his mother. The face of Gordon lighted up with approving pleasure, which he expressed warmly, adding, 'How my mother loved me!' He was not strong in his early years, and this may account for special affection being felt and shown towards him. We can imagine the thankful joy when his eldest brother wrote, after a time of more than ordinary peril at Sebastopol, 'Only a few lines to say Charlie is all right, and has escaped amidst a terrific shower of grape and shells of every description. You may imagine the suspense I was kept in until assured of his safety.' This is here mentioned because giving a glimpse of the affection which brightened the home life of the Gordon family.

At School and at the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich.—Of the early years of Gordon not much is recorded. His first training and education were at home, and with the disadvantage of having to move to where his father's

military duties called him. For instance, he was for some time at Corfu, where his father was in command of the artillery. Here, the Duke of Cambridge, in his speech at the Mansion House after Gordon's death, said he remembered the boy, then living in the next room to his in the officers' quarters. He went to school for some time at Taunton, preparatory to going to the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich, which he entered in his fifteenth year. Of his proficiency in study there we hear nothing except that he excelled in drawing and in map-making—an accomplishment for which he continued through life to be distinguished. One or two incidents of this period revealed the natural temper of the lad. His mother had been exhibiting one of his drawings with pardonable pride, but he afterwards destroyed the map, to prevent the repetition of praise that was distasteful to him. On one occasion he was reprimanded and told 'he would never make an officer;' a rebuke which roused his temper so much that he tore his cadet epaulets from his shoulders and flung them at his superior's feet! He must have stood well, however, in the pass-list, on the whole, to get his commission in the corps of Engineers. Writing home long afterwards from Central Africa, in 1875, on hearing of two young friends going in for their examinations at Woolwich, he said, 'How I remember those terrible examinations! I sometimes dream of them. Poor —— and ——, I hope they have succeeded; it is such anxiety, waiting and waiting for the results.

First Appointment.—On leaving the Woolwich Academy for service he was ordered to Pembroke, where he was employed in drawing plans for the forts and defences of the haven. This was in August, 1854, and in November of the same year he got orders for Corfu. He had been there in boyhood, as we have seen, when his father was in command of the artillery. It was better than being drafted to New Zealand or to the West Indies, but still a disappointment of his hope of going to the Crimea, where every ardent spirit at that time longed to see active service. Not anxious to revisit the Ionian Islands, he asked for two months' leave, to be passed on duty at Pembroke—a request readily granted; and before the close of the year, whether from some interest used or from the call for qualified officers, we find that the route was changed, and the young engineer officer started for Sebastopol.

In the Crimea.—Gordon arrived at Balaklava on New Year's Day, 1855. Some of the most memorable events of the Crimean war were then matters of history — the battle of the Alma; the famous Balaklava charge of the light cavalry brigade; and the battle of Inkerman—the last on November 5, 1854. The allies had settled down to the difficult and tedious operations of the siege of Sebastopol. Winter had set in, and the Russians were reinforced by two powerful helpers, as they said, in General Janvier and General Février. Then came what

Earl Russell spoke of as 'the horrible and heartrending scenes' of that Crimean winter. There were no proper tents or huts ready for shelter against the inclement weather; the commissariat department had utterly broken down; the medical and hospital service was miserably inefficient. The appeals of newspaper correspondents roused a feeling, first of indignation, and then of sympathy, at home, and supplies and comforts were hurried out, but not in time to save thousands of brave men from perishing during that dismal winter. Gordon had reported himself at once at head-quarters, but not being detailed for any duty for several weeks, he had time to see for himself the real state of affairs, and he recorded some of his observations in his *Letters from the Crimea.*

Wearisome Work at Sebastopol.— When he joined in active operations the chief duty was in the slowly advancing trenches. This work continued from the middle of February till spring was well advanced. It was a toilsome and inglorious kind of service. The working parties relieved each other day by day and night by night in the wearisome and perilous work. The Russian artillery seldom ceased to fire from their forts, while nearer danger arose from the rifle-pits, whence the bullets harassed the workers in the trenches. Occasionally there were sudden attacks in force, and severe fighting was necessary to hold their ground. But, throughout, the main loss was

due to disease arising from the cold and fatigue and exposure. This went on till the end of April, when the capture of the Mamelon Fort became necessary, as it enfiladed the advance work of the allies. From this time the siege became more animated, but it was not till autumn—in September, 1855—that the Russians retired from their defences, and the allies gained possession of Sebastopol.

Incidents in the Trenches.—One day, in going the round of the trenches, he heard a corporal and a sapper of engineers in violent altercation. He stopped to ask what was the matter, when he was told that the men were engaged placing some fresh gabions in the battery, and that the corporal had ordered the sapper to stand up on the parapet, where he was exposed to the enemy's fire, while the former, in the full shelter of the battery, handed the baskets up to him. Gordon at once jumped up to the parapet, ordering the corporal to join him, while the sapper handed them the gabions. When the work was done, and done under the fire of the watchful Russian gunners, Gordon turned to the corporal, and said, 'Never order a man to do anything that you are afraid to do yourself.'

On another occasion he found some men at a loss what to do, the Russian fire having been so heavy that the officers and non-commissioned officers had all been killed. Gordon at once leaped down, and stayed with the men till they were directed and encouraged to proceed with their work.

He had always laborious and often perilous work in the trenches. In one letter he says, 'I have now been thirty-four times twenty hours in the trenches, more than a month straight on end. It gets tedious after a time; but if anything is going on, one does not mind.' On one occasion he saw the smoke from an embrasure on his left, and heard a shell coming, but did not see it. It struck the ground about five yards in front of him, and burst, not touching him. If it had not burst, it would have taken his head off.

Incidents during the Siege.—Gordon's place being chiefly in the trenches, his general comments on the siege are now of little interest; but some further personal incidents and remarks in his letters are worthy of special notice, as illustrating his character. On one occasion he lost a comrade, Captain Craigie, who was killed by a splinter from a shell. In mentioning this in a letter home, he thus wrote: 'I am glad to say that he was a serious man. The shell burst above him, and *by what is called chance* struck him in the back, killing him at once.' Thus early he displayed his 'fatalism,' as some have called it; but rather let us say, his habit of referring all events to the will of God. It is only in accordance with the common camp saying, 'Every bullet has its billet.' But there is evidence of deeper religious feeling in the words, 'I am glad to say that he was a serious man,' denoting his views as to the wisdom and safety of being prepared by Divine grace for all events.

A similar expression of feeling occurs in his mention of Lord Raglan's death, when he says 'I hope he was prepared, but do not know.'

Of his personal coolness during the siege there is a curious proof in another letter. A bullet from a rifle-pit less than two hundred yards distant passed within an inch of his head, about which narrow escape he wrote, 'The Russians are very good marksmen; their bullet is large and pointed.' Although much in the trenches, and taking part in sorties, the only mishap that befell him was a slight contusion on the forehead from a stone struck up by a shell, by which he was kept only a few hours from duty.

Recognition of Services at Sebastopol.—Although the position of an engineer subaltern was a humble one, Gordon's conduct gained the notice and approval of his superiors, while he was beloved by his comrades. General Jones, who succeeded Lord Raglan as Commander-in-Chief mentioned him in despatches as 'an officer who had done gallant service, but who, from the constitution of the corps (Engineers, wherein promotion goes by seniority), could not be promoted.' He was decorated with the French Legion of Honour, a mark of distinction seldom conferred on so young an officer. A handsome tribute to his merit was paid by Colonel Chesney in writing about his after career in China: 'Gordon had first seen war in the hard school of "the Black Winter" of the Crimea. He attracted the notice of his superiors, not merely

by his energy and activity, but by a special aptitude for war; developing itself, amid the trench work before Sebastopol, in a personal knowledge of the enemy's movements, such as no other officer attained. We used to send him to find out what new move the Russians were making.'

After Sebastopol.—After the fall of Sebastopol Gordon served with the force at the capture of Kinburn, and then, returning to the Crimea, was for four months engaged in the demolition of the forts, quays, dockyards, and barracks of Sebastopol. This tedious but necessary duty completed, he was sent as assistant-commissioner to assist Major (now General Sir E.) Stanton, along with representative French, Russian, and Austrian officers, to settle the new boundaries of the Danubian Provinces. This employment lasted till April, 1857, when he was ordered to engage in similar service on the Russian frontiers in Asia. He sent a telegram home, trying to get an exchange, as he wished a relief from the somewhat monotonous duties of a boundary commissioner, but his value was known, and the answer was, 'Gordon must go.'

In his letters from Armenia he has given many interesting accounts of places well known in ancient or modern history—Erzeroum, Kars, Batoum, Erivan,—from which last station he made the ascent of Mount Ararat, with its greater and lesser peaks. His remarks about the Russian rule in the Transcaucasian regions, and the condition

of the Armenians in relation to Russia, have important bearings on present political complications and future possible conflicts, and are worthy of attention. His life among the Kurds and other mountain tribes he thoroughly enjoyed. He returned to England for six months' leave, after having been in the East for three years.

Returning to Armenia, he there remained during most of the year 1858. In 1859 we find him stationed at Chatham as Field-Work Instructor and Adjutant.

The Chinese War of 1860.—In the summer of 1860, Gordon was ordered to join the British force then, along with the French, engaged in war with China. It was not a war of much glory, either in its origin, progress, or results. After the capture of the Taku Forts, the Chinese were ready to listen to terms, but the cruel treatment of some British officers who had been taken prisoners by the Imperial general-in-chief called for stern reprisals. The allies marched on Pekin in October, and the city was invested. The Emperor and his Court had sought safety by retiring towards the mountains and deserts of the northern frontier. The destruction of the celebrated Summer Palace of the Emperor, the Yuen-min-yuen (Garden of Gardens), was resolved upon. It was there that the British captives had been exposed to the utmost injury and torture, if not by direction, certainly with the approval of the Emperor, who was there at the time. The

beauty and wealth of this palace had long been celebrated throughout the world. One of the most complete accounts of the place is that of the Jesuit Du Halde, which had been published in Paris and London, in the time of Louis XIV. No Western palace could approach it in splendour and wealth. The Chinese were compelled to pay £10,000 for each British officer, and £500 for each soldier, who perished during their captivity there; but the palace itself was also given up to be looted and destroyed. Gordon witnessed the scene, and he confirms what all others have asserted as to the wanton devastation being perpetrated chiefly by the French soldiery. Some of the French officers secured jewels and ornaments of priceless value, and one of these had the impudence some years after to open, in London, an exhibition of his spoils. In a letter at the time Gordon wrote—'You can scarcely imagine the beauty and magnificence of the palaces we burnt. It made one's heart sore to burn them; in fact, those palaces were so large, and we were so pressed for time, that we could not plunder them carefully. Quantities of gold ornaments were burned, considered as brass. It was wretchedly demoralising work for an army. Everybody was wild for plunder. You would scarcely conceive the tremendous devastation the French have committed. The throne and rooms were lined with ebony, carved in a marvellous way. There were huge mirrors of all shapes and kinds, clocks, watches, musical boxes with puppets on them, magnificent china

of every description, heaps and heaps of silks of all colours, embroidery, and as much splendour and civilisation as you would see at Windsor; carved ivory screens, coral screens, large amounts of treasure. The French have smashed everything in the most wanton way. It was a scene of utter destruction which passes my description.'

The Taeping Rebellion.—For ten or twelve years before the conclusion of the Chinese war with England and France, there had been raging an armed insurrection, amounting almost to a civil war. At all times there is discontent and disturbance in some part of the vast empire; but the leader of this new revolt proved to be a more dangerous and permanent power for evil. Hung Sew-tshen was a village schoolmaster near Canton, who had picked up some crude notions of the new religion taught by the Christian missionaries. Whether he had any belief in the truth of the tenets which he proclaimed, or only used them in support of his personal ambition, is not now very clear. At first there was some tendency to look upon him as a helper towards the overthrow of Chinese superstition, while others regarded him as the representative of the Chinese nation, who was to deliver the people from the tyrannous yoke of the Tartar conquerors who had so long ruled the country. Having proclaimed himself as 'The Heavenly King,' who was destined to rule as sovereign, he selected from his relatives and friends five chief 'Wangs,' or military leaders,

and with their aid organised an army of irregular troops, with which he commenced his conquest of the empire. Wherever these hordes moved, the country was desolated, and cities and villages were plundered and destroyed. The worst scoundrels of the empire flocked to the standard of this lawless rebel chief.

Hung began his northward progress in 1851, and in less than three years he was in possession of Nanking, the second city of the empire, which he made his capital and his head-quarters. Here he soon displayed his real character, living in regal state, but with a grossness of profligacy and excess of cruelty which can be accounted for only by regarding him as insane. It is probable that the success of his arms had really turned his head, if at first he had any sincerity in professing to be a public reformer. While he remained at Nanking his generals spread themselves wherever they could find booty, and the Imperial troops had the utmost difficulty in checking their progress, for the native hordes of robbers and murderers had been joined by numerous European and American adventurers, eager to share the fortunes and the gains of the rebel chiefs.

Progress of the Rebellion.—The story of this great rebellion can never be fully told or made clearly intelligible to Western readers. It was as if throughout several of the countries of Europe order was at an end, and all authority overthrown; while lawless brigands and the criminal

classes in each place oppressed and plundered the industrious and peaceable people. France during the Reign of Terror, or Paris under the Commune, may afford some idea of the state of affairs. Yet in the worst of European insurrections and revolutions—at least, since the destruction of ancient Rome by the barbarians—there has always survived some show or form of authority, even when the powers of law and of police have disappeared before armed violence. But in this Chinese insurrection the lives and property of the people—of the industrious and labouring classes, as well as of the wealthy and learned classes—were at the mercy of armed rebels, belonging to the same order as the vilest mobs in the towns. Where the leaders of the revolt went, the crimes and massacres were publicly known; but in many other districts, stripped of military protection and in the hands of the worst rabble, were enacted scenes of untold horror. Famine and pestilence finished the cruel work of war, and large tracts of country once fertile and populous became regions of desolation and death. Some native historian may gather the records and traditions of this dark time for the information of his countrymen, but to us the details of the rebellion can never possess interest. It is enough to try to understand the main movements, and to learn the most important results. Of these movements, in places so remote and unknown, only a few now gain our attention or claim our recollection; and this chiefly because associated with names in other ways familiar, such as Nanking,

with its porcelain tower, the city which was for several years the head-quarters of the Taeping army, and the residence of its chief. We can here only refer to those events of the conflict which led to Gordon taking a prominent part in it.

The war with the allies in 1860 found the Imperial army weakened by the efforts to crush the Taepings, who regained fresh vigour from the disasters that threatened China from foreign invaders. The rich province of Kiang-su was overrun, and its chief city, Soochow, fell into the possession of the rebels. Shanghai was next threatened, although for a time Admiral Hope had obtained from the rebel king an engagement not to interfere with the free commerce of the great Yang-tse River.

Shanghai Threatened.—In the spring of 1862 the rebels moved towards Shanghai, where were many European merchants, and which the allies still held till the indemnity for the war was paid. Up to this time the Taepings had been viewed not exactly as allies, but as assisting in weakening the Imperial power. But now the strange spectacle was seen of the European allies, French and English, uniting with the Chinese Imperial forces against the rebels. It was time to take urgent measures in self-defence. The rebels had devastated all the neighbouring country, driving the peaceful peasants into the city, and coming up to the very gates. An irregular force had been organised at the expense of the

Shanghai merchants, commanded first by Ward, an American seaman, who showed considerable skill and courage, and operated successfully along with the Chinese regular troops in driving back the rebels. Being killed in one of the encounters, he was succeeded in the command by another American adventurer, Burgevine, a man also of ability and daring, but who, having been detected in dishonest appropriation of funds, was dismissed, and afterwards transferred his services to the rebels.

At this juncture, Li-Hung-Chang, the Chinese Governor of the Kiang province—Governor Li, as he was then commonly called—asked Sir Charles Staveley, the chief of the British force at Shanghai, to name an English officer to the vacant command. He recommended Gordon, but had to refer to the War Office for sanction. Gordon did not regret the delay, for he was engaged in an official survey of that district, which he knew would be of immense service in subsequent military operations.

The Ever Victorious Army.—Meanwhile, Captain Holland, chief of Sir Charles Staveley's staff, took the temporary command of the force, which from its successes under Ward had already the *sobriquet* of E.V.A., the 'Ever Victorious Army.' Being repulsed in an attack on Tai-tsan with great loss, and an expedition against Fushan under Major Brennan having also been disastrous, the prestige of the 'Ever Victorious Army' had been destroyed, and the rebels were elated with their successes.

Gordon assumes Command.—*At this crisis* permission came from England for Gordon—now promoted to be major for his services in the Chinese war—to assume the command. This was early in 1863, he having just passed his thirtieth year. The force was then about 3,000 strong, ill armed, ill disciplined, and inferior in physique and spirit to the rebel troops. Gordon at once set to work to drill and discipline the motley force. He arranged that the rations and the pay should be regular. Picked men were enlisted from the rebel prisoners, who were delighted to join the new service. The non-commissioned officers, all natives, were selected from the ranks. Many were men of doubtful character, and not a few outlaws, but they soon learned to respect and obey a commander in whose kindness and justice, energy and skill, they found good cause to confide. So great was Gordon's personal influence, that his body-guard was usually composed of those who had fought most fiercely against him. The officers of the force, about a hundred and fifty in all, were foreigners, and of strangely diverse nationalities. Americans were perhaps most numerous, with Englishmen, Germans, Frenchmen, Poles, and men of half a dozen other European countries and tongues. They had been heretofore unruly and insubordinate, quarrelsome, and jealous of each other; but gradually all disaffection ceased, and almost every man in the force looked up with pride and respect to their young English com-

mander. His personal staff was composed of a few officers of the British Army, who obtained permission to serve as volunteers in his irregular force. Having stipulated that his command was to be entirely independent of the Imperialist generals, and this independence being guaranteed by the general-in-chief of the Chinese army, Gordon took over the command from Captain Holland, March 25, 1863.

Reasons for assuming Command of Chinese Troops.—Writing home to his mother after having assumed command of the Sung-Kian force, then operating against the rebels, he says—'I have taken the step on consideration. I think that any one who contributes to putting down this rebellion fulfils a humane task, and I also think tends a great deal towards opening China to civilisation. I will not act rashly, and I trust to be able soon to return to England; at the same time, I will remember your and my father's wishes, and endeavour to remain as short a time as possible. I can say that if I had not accepted the command I believe the force would have been broken up, and the rebellion gone on in its misery for years. I trust this will not now be the case.'

Gordon lost no time in forming his plans and proceeding to carry them into swift execution. The immediate danger was the capture and sacking of Shanghai, for which the rebels had evidently been making preparation. Instead of losing time in strengthening the defences, or

resisting the approach of the assailants, Gordon resolved to deal a sudden blow at some distant point, and so restore confidence to his men, and perplex the enemy. The Taeping power, after its *years of activity in other parts of the empire, was now chiefly concentrated in the north-eastern* territory, from Nanking in the north to Hangchow in the south, a densely peopled, fertile, rich district, formed chiefly by the alluvial soil of the great Yang-tse River. Every town in the provinces of Che-kiang and Kiang-su was in the possession of the rebels, except Shanghai, one of the principal Treaty Ports, where were many foreign merchants and traders.

Soochow, the chief city of that part of the empire, had been in the hands of the rebels since 1860. Between Soochow and Tai-tsan, a strongly fortified town, a trunk road passed through Quinsan, a place of great strategical importance, and the chief arsenal of the Taepings.

Gordon's First Victories. — Tai-tsan was taken by storm; and not long after, Quinsan, on the Great Canal, was taken, with the help of an improvised river steamboat, the Hyson, and some small gunboats. The capture of Quinsan was a masterly stroke, cutting the communication of the rebels on their main line. Numbers were killed, and eight hundred prisoners, on being spared, gladly joined Gordon's force. Had he been supported by Imperialist troops, Soochow could have been easily taken during the panic caused by the

victory at Quinsarr, but it was found necessary to prepare for a more formal attack on that strong place.

In the *Leisure Hour* for May, 1885, was printed an unpublished journal, in which Gordon presents a brief summary of his operations, and of his conflicts with the rebels. The capture of Soochow was one of the most difficult and most important of his exploits. The details of the siege and assaults are given in books by Mr. Wilson and by Mr. Hake. In that condensed journal of Gordon the substance of the story is graphically told. It was only after a long time that the city could be completely invested. The rebel general in command, Mow Wang, was one of the ablest lieutenants of the Heavenly King, and of his generalissimo, Chang Wang, who had remained at Nanking, but hastened now to assist in the defence of Soochow, garrisoned by 40,000 rebels.

The Magic Wand of Victory.—It was in leading in person the repeated attacks required for entering the Chinese works at Soochow, which were stoutly defended, that Gordon made himself more than ever conspicuous by his personal daring. It is against the rules and usages of war that the director of operations so extensive should always be in the front of the fighting; but the desperate courage of the rebels at this place had made the assailants almost timid, and Gordon risked his life to set the example of daring and endurance. He carried no weapons, but he led his

men to attack the most dangerous posts, pointing onward with his cane, which got for itself the name of 'Gordon's magic wand of victory.'

Massacre of Rebel Leaders.—Some of the rebel chiefs, seeing that prolonged resistance was hopeless, made overtures for surrender. A council of war was held, when Mow Wang seemed resolute for resisting to the end. Gordon had instructed his representatives to promise the lives of the rebel generals if they surrendered. Finding Mow Wang resolute, he was assassinated by his fellow-commanders, and the others then made submission. By order of Li-Hung-Chang, the Imperial general, the surrendered Wangs were beheaded. Gordon had already withdrawn his men from the front, greatly to their disgust, as they looked forward to the sacking of the city.

Resignation of Command.—It was not till some time afterwards that Gordon knew of the assassination of the rebel chiefs, notwithstanding his promise of saving their lives. His fury knew no bounds. Returning to the city alone and at great peril, to ascertain the real state of the case, he learned that Li had ordered their death. He sought to find him, revolver in hand, and would assuredly have killed him if Li had not kept for several days in concealment. Gordon was so vexed at the dishonour put upon the word of an Englishman that he threw up his command, and

returned to Shanghai, resolved to serve no longer with the Chinese.

Gordon resumes Command.—The absence of Gordon was soon felt, both in the increased activity of the rebels and in the disorder in the plans and operations of the Imperial forces. At the earnest entreaty of the Government, he resumed his command. The force now was at Quinsan, which was the head-quarters during the winter of 1863-64. In February forward movements were again made, the details of which will be found in the journal already referred to. The 'Ever-Victorious Army' did not always justify its appellation, and there were defeats and repulses as well as victories. Gordon does not conceal these disastrous incidents, though he does not mention in his journal his being himself wounded and in peril at Kiutang. But we must refrain from entering into details of this part of the war.

End of Rebellion.—A history of operations among cities of uncouth names, and in regions the geography of which is unknown except to special students, would be tedious and uninstructive. But the general results of the campaign, and the credit due to Gordon in the successful issue, may be gathered from what was said at the time by those best qualified to bear testimony. The foreign residents in Shanghai had been a good deal divided as to the policy of giving aid to the Imperialists, and of putting down the

rebellion ; but when the victorious Taepings threatened their own city, they were all thankful for the defence secured by the irregular forces. And when they were again in safety, and Gordon laid down his command, there was only one opinion among them as to the admirable manner in which the young British officer performed his share in putting down the rebellion. On his leaving to return to England a numerously signed address was presented to him, in which they said—'Your career during the last two years of your residence in the East has been, so far as we know, without a parallel in the history of the intercourse of foreign nations with China. . . . In a position of unequalled difficulty, and surrounded by complications of every possible nature, you have succeeded in offering to the eyes of the Chinese, no less by your loyal and throughout disinterested line of action than by your conspicuous gallantry and talent for organisation and command, the example of a foreign officer serving the Government of this country with honourable fidelity and undeviating self-respect. It is by such examples that we may trust to see many of the prejudices which warp the Chinese mind as regards foreigners removed, and from such experience that we may look forward with hope to the day when not only in the art of war, but in the more peaceful occupations of commerce and civilisation, the Chinese Government may see fit to level the barriers hitherto existing, and to identify itself more and more with the progressive course of action which,

though springing from the West, must prove ultimately of equal benefit to the countries of the East.'

To this address, which also conveyed heartfelt expressions of personal good wishes, Colonel Gordon made a brief and modest reply, acknowledging his satisfaction at the honourable mention of his services, and his gratification at having received this handsome testimony of approval from the residents at Shanghai.

Review of Military Services.—As to the military services referred to, a writer in the *Cornhill Magazine*, who, though unconnected with his army, had personal opportunities of knowing some of its exploits, thus speaks of Gordon: 'By his activity and genius, the three thousand men composing his force seemed multiplied tenfold; and those who, in China, followed the daily accounts of his movements, were astounded at the rapidity with which, in a difficult country, under a scorching sun, and with every obstacle that absence of commissariat or of any organised transport system could throw in his way, he circled from east to west, from north to south. At Soochow (the capture of which was the decisive event of the war) he was seen suddenly swooping down upon a line of external fortifications, now falling upon and routing a relieving army of enormous numbers brought up to attack him in rear, and at another time forcing his steamers through all impediments under the very walls of the city, and seizing a position

which, if properly defended, might have withstood an army with success.'

Mr. Andrew Wilson, formerly editor of the *China Mail* at Hong-Kong, concludes his narrative of the Chinese campaign by the following tribute to the leader of the 'Ever Victorious Army':—'It is impossible to consider Colonel Gordon's operations without admiration of his energy and genius. On assuming command of the force, he found it defeated, dispirited, and in a chaotic condition. Almost the entire province of Kiangsoo, with a considerable portion of Chekiang—an enormous stretch of country, with vast tea and silk districts —was in the hands of the Taepings, who had not only procured arms in abundance from Shanghai and Ningpo, but were also engaging foreign rowdies to fight for them. Moreover, the force of which he assumed command was almost as ready to take one side as the other; and its officers were in a state of disaffection, owing to the supersession of their former leader, Burgevine (an American filibuster), by a British officer, and to the limits within which their plundering propensities were soon confined. Difficulty after difficulty arose between him and his own troops, all of which had to be overcome by his almost unaided tact and judgment. On the other hand, the Chinese authorities caused at first a great deal of unnecessary trouble; and in some very critical moments he was quite uncertain whether the course he pursued would receive the approval of his own Government.

'Finally, the country in which he had to operate was unknown to him: it was peculiarly unsuited for military movements, owing to an absence of roads, and the manner in which it was intersected by canals, streams, and creeks of most varied dimensions; and being frightfully devastated, it could afford no commissariat supplies, while during part of the year it was extremely unhealthy, with its moist fields and stagnant waters steaming under a blazing sun.

'Notwithstanding these disadvantages, Colonel Gordon had a career of not far from uninterrupted success. Both his officers and men became devoted to him, and conducted themselves with a regularity and propriety which were quite astonishing, considering the perils to which they were exposed, and the temptations which they had to resist. By leading, in critical moments, he shamed the more backward of them, and endeared himself to all by the unselfish manner in which he laboured for their benefit, not neglecting to look after the most minute details connected with their comfort. Even his enemies the Taepings, who found in him so formidable an adversary, could not but admire the humanity he displayed in all his dealings with them, and which led him to run so many risks in protecting those who surrendered, and in trying to prevent useless fighting. During the latter months of his command, the body-guard which he had for his own protection, and in whose power he often lay, separated from his force, was almost entirely

composed of Taeping soldiers who had surrendered to him.

'Quite as remarkable was his sleepless activity —the manner in which he obtained information (though himself ignorant of Chinese), his habit of reconnoitring the country by night, almost unattended, and the rapidity with which he moved his troops from point to point.'

Colonel Chesney's Opinion.—Colonel Chesney, a competent judge of military genius and skill, in his *Essays on Modern Military Biography*, gives a chapter to Colonel Gordon and the Taeping rebellion. After narrating the leading incidents of the campaigns, and the services of Gordon in 'saving the Chinese Empire,' the memoir thus concludes: 'So parted the Ever Victorious Army from its general, and its brief but useful existence came to an end. During sixteen months' campaigning under his guidance it had taken four cities and a dozen minor strong places, fought innumerable combats, put *hors de combat* numbers of the enemy moderately estimated at fifteen times its own, and finding the rebellion vigorous, aggressive, and almost threatening the unity of the Chinese Empire, had left it at its last gasp, confined to the ruined capital of the usurper. Leaving his late command well satisfied, Gordon himself sailed for England, taking with him no more substantial treasure than some Chinese titles and decorations, and the goodwill and respect of all with whom he had to do. "Not only," wrote the Prince-King,

the Chinese Prime Minister, to Sir Frederick Bruce — "not only has he shown himself throughout brave and energetic, but his thorough appreciation of that important question, a friendly understanding between China and foreign nations, is worthy of all praise."'

Gordon's Retirement from Command.—'Much has been said, and fairly said, in eulogy of the moderation and patriotism of those volunteer generals of the victorious armies of the American Union who, at the close of the civil war, laid down their important charges to return cheerfully to the counting-house, the factory, or even to the humblest appointment in the regular army on the frontier. Englishmen who bestowed admiration on this conduct of their Transatlantic brethren should certainly yield no less admiration to that of their own countryman; since he, his task once accomplished, asked for no prolongation in any form of his high command, but laid it down to return straightway to the ordinary duty of a captain of engineers on home duty, his highest ambition the furtherance of some local good work, his daily business for years to come the building obscure forts, from the designs of others, on the Essex marshes. The very papers in which the record of his services was inscribed lay thrust out of sight, their existence forgotten save in Mr. Wilson his biographer's mention of them. They might have mouldered away unread, but for the appeal, made almost as a demand, of certain of his brother

officers, awakening to the knowledge that out of their own corps there were few who were aware of the extent and bearing of Gordon's services, and of the importance of the Chinese campaigns of 1863-64.'

Neglect of Gordon by the English War Office.—It is not creditable to the war authorities of the British Government that the most notable military exploits of Gordon up to this time had been in foreign service, instead of under the British flag. In subsequent years he was passed by, when men of vastly inferior merit were advanced to prominent posts. In ordinary times the routine of promotion by seniority may be a convenient arrangement, and there is always room for the play of favouritism and interest; but in times of difficulty—and England has had such times since the close of the Chinese war—the services of Gordon might have been sought. 'If,' said Colonel Chesney, 'there is a man in the world who can conduct a war with honour, thoroughness, and humanity, and bring it to a satisfactory close without needless delay or expense, England has that man in "Chinese Gordon."'

To mention one field only—South Africa—the disasters of the Zulu and of the Transvaal wars could never (humanly speaking) have occurred had a man of Gordon's spirit and capacity been in charge of affairs in those regions. But Providence had appointed other work for him.

Public Opinion in England.—Let one other brief testimony suffice to express the public sentiment of admiration at Gordon's services in China. 'Never,' said the *Times*, in a leading article (August 5, 1864), reviewing his campaigns when the rebellion was as yet not finally put down—'never did soldier of fortune deport himself with a nicer sense of military honour, with more gallantry against the resisting, and with more mercy towards the vanquished, with more disinterested neglect of opportunities of personal advantage, or with more entire devotion to the objects and desires of his own Government, than this officer, who, after all his victories, has just laid down his sword. . . . . The result of his operations is this: He found the richest and most fertile districts of China in the hands of the most savage brigands. The silk districts were the scenes of their cruelty and riot; and the great historical cities of Hangchow and Souchong were rapidly following the fate of Nanking, and were becoming desolate ruins in their possession. Gordon has cut the rebellion in two, has recovered the great cities, has isolated and utterly discouraged the fragments of the brigand power, and has left the marauders nothing but a few tracts of devastated country and their stronghold at Nanking, which cannot long continue to hold out. All this he has effected, first by the power of his arms, and afterwards by the terror of his name.'

Result of Services in China.—As he had written home his reasons for assuming command,

we may give the result of his services, as described by himself in another letter to his mother:—'I shall, of course, make myself quite sure that the rebels are quashed before I break up the force, as otherwise I should incur great responsibility; but on these subjects I act for myself and judge for myself. This I have found to be the best way of getting on. I shall not leave things in a mess, I hope, but I think, if I am spared, I shall be home by Christmas. The losses I have sustained in this campaign have been no joke. Out of 100 officers I have had 48 killed and wounded, and out of 3,500 men nearly 1,000 killed and wounded; but I have the satisfaction of knowing that, as far as mortal can see, six months will see the end of this rebellion, while if I had continued inactive it might have lingered on for six years. Do not think I am ill-tempered, but I do not care one jot about my promotion, or what people may say. I know I shall leave China as poor as when I entered it, but with the knowledge that through my weak instrumentality upwards of eighty to one hundred thousand lives have been spared. I want no further satisfaction than this.'

Reward for Services in China.—The Chinese Emperor and his Government were not ungrateful to Gordon for the splendid services he had rendered to the empire. The Emperor conferred on him the grade of Ti-tu, the highest military title in the Chinese army. The orders of the Peacock's Feather and of the Yellow Jacket were high distinctions for a foreigner, the latter being confined

to only a small and select number of mandarins, and as much coveted as our order of the Garter. 'I do not care twopence about these things,' wrote Gordon to his mother, 'but I know that you and my father like them.' A gold medal was sent as a special gift from the Chinese Empress-mother. Large sums of money were offered, which Gordon refused to take, and when pressed to receive £10,000 he divided it among his troops. He was allowed the most liberal means for rewarding the officers wounded in the service; and the whole of the force which he was engaged in disbanding received more than the pay due to them, and allowances for enabling them to reach their homes. His own pay he had always spent in supplying comforts for his troops, or relieving the distress of the people around him. Hence he could say truly, 'I leave China as poor as when I entered it.'

Prince Kung's Astonishment.—Prince Kung, then the virtual ruler of the empire, commissioned by the Emperor to arrange as to Gordon and his army, was amazed at the conduct of the man, so different from that of all foreigners who had before been in the Imperial service. A letter appeared in the *Times*, which Mr. Hake has reproduced in his book, in which the writer said—'Being at Shanghai in the summer of 1864 I met the late Sir Frederick Bruce, our Minister, on his way to England. He told me that the very day before he left Pekin he was astonished at receiving a personal

visit from Prince Kung, the then Regent of China, who had some days before come to say good-bye to him. The Prince said, "You will be surprised to see me again, but I felt I could not allow you to leave without coming to see you about Gordon. We do not know what to do. He will not receive money from us, and we have already given him every honour which it is in the power of the Emperor to bestow; but as these can be of little value in his eyes, I have brought you this letter, and ask you to give it to the Queen of England, that she may bestow on him some reward which would be more valuable in his eyes." Sir Frederick showed me a translation of Prince Kung's letter. I only remember that it was couched in the most charming terms, and that it pleaded Gordon's services as to what he had done to promote the kindly intercourse between the two nations, while fully acknowledging the immense services he had rendered to China.'

The letter and despatch of Prince Kung showed him to be a generous and high-minded man; and Sir Frederick Bruce, in forwarding the despatch to Earl Russell, added his own recommendation, saying, 'Lieutenant-Colonel Gordon well deserves Her Majesty's favour, for, independent of the skill and courage he has shown, his disinterestedness has elevated our national character in the eyes of the Chinese. Not only has he refused any pecuniary reward, but he has spent more than his pay in contributing to the comfort of the officers who served under him, and in

assuaging the distress of the starving population whom he relieved from the yoke of their oppressors.'

Mr. Hake says he believes that this letter of Sir Frederick Bruce's was put into the pigeon-holes of the Foreign Office, and that Gordon's name never reached the ears of the Queen or the English nation in the way intended by Prince Kung. It is said that on presenting himself at the War Office after his return, the then Minister did not seem to have heard his name, and knew nothing of his work in China! However this may be, it is certain that he afterwards received the distinction of a brevet lieutenant-colonelcy in the Royal Engineers, and the honour of being made a C.B. (Commander of the Bath).

Gordon's Final Services in China.—Before he left China, an order from the home authorities had withdrawn the leave for any British officers to continue in the Imperial service. Gordon could not, therefore, even if he had thought it advisable, have aided in putting the final stroke to the Taeping rebellion. But there really remained little to be done. The strong city of Chanchu-fu was the last which Gordon carried by assault, on May 11, 1864. Nanking held out some time longer, but the Imperial troops closely invested it, and when at last it was captured, the rebel chief, 'The Heavenly King,' as he still styled himself, committed suicide. His most powerful military leader, Chung Wang, and other generals, were

beheaded by the Imperialists, and the rebellion was ended.

Gordon during the summer and autumn months was mainly occupied in arranging affairs at Shanghai, and disbanding the 'Ever Victorious Army,' which he thought of great importance. Had they kept together, and found an unscrupulous leader like Burgevine, they might have revived the rebellion on their own account, and caused much trouble. Gordon found time to visit the commander of the Imperial troops at Nanking, and gave advice as to the capture of the city.

He was also much engaged with 'Governor Li,' to whom he gave valuable hints as to strengthening the native army. He had forgiven him for the offence which for a time had separated them—the execution of the rebel chiefs after Gordon's promise of sparing their lives. 'That the execution of the Wangs at Soochow,' wrote Gordon afterwards, 'was a breach of faith, there is no doubt; but there were many reasons to exculpate the Futai (general) for his action, which is not at all bad in the eyes of the Chinese. In my opinion Li-Hung-Chang is the best man in the empire, has correct ideas of his position, and, for a Chinaman, has most liberal tendencies. To support him—and he has a most difficult part to play with the other mandarins—would be the best policy of our Government.' It is pleasant to know that Gordon's high opinion of Li-Hung-Chang was reciprocated, and Li's love of his English friend remained unchanged

after long separation. We trust that, with the Marquis Tseng, he may do much yet for China.

Chinese Tributes to Gordon's Memory.— Among the various tributes paid to the memory of Gordon, none were more touching than those which came from the far-off land of China, where his memory is still cherished, and where his name will be honoured in history.

To the memorial fund inaugurated by the Lord Mayor of London a handsome subscription was sent from the Emperor of China himself, as well as from the Chinese Ambassador in England, and from some of the chief statesmen of China. One of the latter was the celebrated Li-Hung-Chang. Li-Hung can never forget the time when Gordon pursued him, pistol in hand, resolved to take his life, in indignation at what he believed was barbarian cruelty in killing some of the rebel chiefs for whose safety he had given the word of honour of an English soldier. The story of that exciting incident spread far and wide, and will be long remembered in Chinese history, giving a memorable lesson of truth and honour. Li-Hung's part in the treacherous cruelty was somewhat explained afterwards, and he certainly showed nobility of character in continuing to regard Gordon with respect and affection even after the narrow escape of death at his hands. Long afterwards, when Governor of the Soudan, Gordon wrote from Khartoum to his old comrade-in-arms. The letter was dated October 27, 1878; and in replying, on

March 22, 1879, Li-Hung said: 'I am right glad to hear from you. It is now fourteen years since we parted from each other. Although I have not written to you, I often speak of you, and remember you with very great interest. The benefit you have conferred on China does not disappear with your person, but is felt throughout the regions in which you played so important and active a part. All these people bless you for the blessings of peace and prosperity which they now enjoy. Your achievements in Egypt are well known throughout the civilised world. I see often in the papers of your noble works on the Upper Nile. You are a man of ample resources, with which you suit yourself to any kind of emergency. My hope is that you may long be spared to improve the condition of the people among whom your lot is cast. I am striving hard to advance my people to a higher state of development, and to unite both this and all other nations within the Four Seas under one common brotherhood.'

So we see how Gordon left in China not only the reputation of a great name, but the influence of a good example.

At Gravesend.—Gordon returned to England in February, 1865. Avoiding all public notice, he passed most of the spring of that year with his relatives at Southampton. Receiving the appointment of Commanding Royal Engineer at Gravesend, he was engaged during the remainder of that year, and the next six years, in the direction of the

works connected with the defences of the Thames. This was one of the military works undertaken during the panic caused by threatened war with France. It attracted less attention than the fortifications at Portsmouth and the great arsenals, but was equally required for the national defence. New forts were built on both banks of the river, and the old batteries at Tilbury and other points were restored and strengthened. The superintendence of these works, the direction of the staff and workmen employed on them, with much official correspondence, demanded no little labour and time. The minutest details were carefully attended to personally; and yet, through his energy and activity, with habits of early rising, and diligent use of every available moment, he found leisure for work which has become as famous as his military services.

The six years passed at Gravesend were, he himself has said, among the happiest and busiest of his active life. He found congenial relaxation from his professional duties in works of charity and beneficence. The Colonel's house soon was as well known as that of the good pastor in Goldsmith's *Deserted Village.* It was his delight to relieve the wretched, to comfort the sorrowful, and to help the struggling poor.

'God Bless the Colonel!'—'To the world his life at Gravesend,' says Mr. Hake, one of his biographers, 'was a life of self-suppression and self-denial; to himself it was one of happiness and pure

peace. He lived wholly for others. His house was school and hospital and almshouse in turn, and was more like the abode of a missionary than of a colonel of engineers. The troubles of all interested him alike. The poor, the sick, the unfortunate were ever welcome, and never did suppliant knock vainly at his door. He always took a great delight in children, but especially in boys employed on the river or the sea. Many he rescued from the gutter; cleansed them and clothed them, and kept them for weeks in his home. For their benefit he established evening classes, over which he himself presided, reading to and teaching the lads with as much ardour as if he were leading them to victory. He called them his "kings," and for many of them he got berths on board ship. One day a friend asked him why there were so many pins stuck into the map of the world over his mantelpiece; he was told that they marked and followed the course of the boys on their voyages—that they were moved from point to point as his youngsters advanced, and that he prayed for them as they went, day by day. The light in which he was held by these lads was shown by inscriptions in chalk on the fences. A favourite legend was "God bless the Kernel!" So full did his classes at length become that the house would no longer hold them, and they had to be given up. Then it was that he attended and taught at the ragged-schools, and it was a pleasant thing to watch the attention with which his wild scholars listened to his words.

A Lady's Description of him at Gravesend.—'His benevolence embraced all,' writes one who saw much of him at this time. 'Misery was quite sufficient claim for him, without going into the question of merit; and of course sometimes he was deceived, but very seldom, for he had an eye that saw through and through people—it seemed useless to try to hide anything from him. I have often wondered how much this wonderful power was due to natural astuteness, or how much to his own clear singleness of mind and freedom from self that the truth about everything seemed revealed to him. The workhouse and the infirmary were his constant haunts, and of pensioners he had a countless number all over the neighbourhood. Many of the dying sent for him in preference to the clergy, and ever ready was he to visit them, no matter in what weather or at what distance. But he would never take the chair at a religious meeting, or be in any way prominent. He was always willing to conduct services for the poor, and address a sweeps' tea-meeting; but all public speechifying, especially where complimentary speeches were made in his honour, he *loathed.*

'He always had dry humorous little speeches at command that flavoured all his talk, and I remember the merry twinkle with which he told us that many of the boys, thinking that being invited to live with the Colonel meant delicate fare and luxury, were unpleasantly enlightened upon that point when they found he sat down with them to salt beef and just the necessary food.

'He kindly gave us a key to his garden, thinking our children might like to walk there sometimes. The first time my husband and I visited it, we remarked what nice peas and vegetables of all kinds there were, and the housekeeper coming out, we made some such remark to her. She at once told us that the Colonel never tasted them—that nearly all the garden, a large one, was cultivated by different poor people, to whom he gave permission to plant what they chose, and to take the proceeds. She added that it often happened that presents of fine fruit and flowers would be sent to the Colonel, and that he would take them or send them at once to the hospital or workhouse for the sick. He always thanked the donors, but never told them how their gifts had been appropriated. We used to say he had no *self*—in that following his Divine Master. He would never talk of himself and his doings. Therefore his life never can and never will be written.

'It was in these years that the first book about him came out. He allowed the author to come and stay at Fort House, and gave him every facility towards bringing out his book (all the particulars about the Taeping rebellion), even to lending him his diary. Then, from something that was said, he discovered that personal acts of his own (bravery, possibly) were described, and he asked to see what had been written. Then he tore out page after page—the parts about himself,—to the poor author's chagrin, who told him he had spoiled his book. I tried to get at the bottom of this feeling of his,

telling him he might be justly proud of these things; but was answered that no man has a right to be proud of anything, inasmuch as he has no *native* good in him—he has received it all.'

Gordon's House at Gravesend.—Mr. Arnold White has published in the *Pall Mall Gazette* some interesting particulars of Gordon's life at Gravesend. Most of the facts were gathered during a recent visit:—

'The modest quarters in which Gordon lived stand in the centre of one of the forts. Clinker-built and russet-tiled, the outside of the cottage appears more humble than it really is. Entering through a little passage, and leaving the dining-room on the right, the drawing or sitting-room gives an outlook to a spacious lawn, with one spreading chestnut tree, backed by the earthworks and bastions of the fort. A fireplace faces the bow window, and over the chimney-piece Gordon placed his map of the world, with the little flags to mark the progress of his "kings" in their wanderings by land and sea. This room was used by Gordon in his leisure moments; and in it many and many a poor fellow from the gutter and the shrimp-boat first found help and hope. Upstairs is Gordon's bedroom, with a fine view of the Sheerness bend in the Thames, of the four forts, and of the busy steamers trafficking up and down the stream. Adjacent is the boys' room, where Gordon's "kings" were accommodated wholesale, so near to the Colonel's own chamber that any uproar could quickly be checked.

'Outside, the garden beds, box-edged and old fashioned, are quite unchanged. On summer days this garden was in Gordon's time the resort of the old and the halt. Fourteen years have passed away since Gordon left Gravesend. He has, however, contrived to leave behind him, especially among the poor, so passionate a clinging to his memory that his loss is to them a reality and a sorrow that cannot be observed without sharing in their pain.

'Thus, an old man, in horn barnacles, half-blind, with a keen memory, and obvious sincerity—for he could not read the newspapers, and he had no one now to read them for him—spoke of Gordon's goodness to the wife now dead. Doctors ordered, as doctors will, delicacies beyond the old man's means. Wine and soup were as much out of his reach as a trip to Madeira. Gordon heard of this, and the delicacies and wine were brought twice a day by his own hand; and when the cares of Coal-house Fort or other of the iron-shielded Thames defences detained him, he would always send the soup or the wine. When the old woman grew better, Gordon would sit by her bedside and read the Scriptures; and the old husband says she listened gladly. The Fort House garden and its box-edged walks were made free to the woman and her husband, and for a few years she hobbled in on sunny days, and took her ease on the lawn and among the old-fashioned flowers. She and her benefactor are both gone to their long homes now; and the only spectator of the facts I relate is

an old man, who cannot be long in following after them.

'Sometimes Gordon would be deceived. His good heart laid him open to unscrupulous practices. Children would be sent shoeless into the streets to waylay the Colonel. Clothes would be torn, to simulate the rags of misery. The curious part of these devices is in the sequel. The perpetrators, though they succeeded in "doing" the Colonel in the first instance, were broken down in their efforts by the sheer power of affection the man inspired. My informant said, "Them as swindled him was the most sorry, 'specially when the news came of his death."

'I encountered one old man who had been a sergeant in the Crimea, and who had had one transaction with Gordon at that early date. The sergeant had saved and wished to remit £7 to his wife, and applied to Gordon to send it home. Gordon sent it home, and without saying anything about it added £3, making £10 in all. A year passed, when the sergeant returned home, and found that Gordon, surmising that the wife was not too well off, had silently supplemented from his own scanty pay the sergeant's remittance. Gordon believed in outdoor relief. His pensioners were not a few. Sometimes he would pay a poor and deserving woman to look after a superannuated man, and if the woman acquitted herself well of her task—and he was strict in requiring good work—he would take her under his own care. There is at least one such case in Gravesend now—the case

of an elderly woman, whose care of one of Gordon's pensioners had drawn from the Colonel a promise of help "when he came back from Khartoum." This promise must now be redeemed by others, and it is an honour to share in it.

'Perhaps the spot most directly connected with the story of Gordon's Gravesend life is the dingy corner of the ragged-school, with the tall window looking on to the unlovely red tiles and the grey bricks and mortar of the soup-kitchen. Here in this corner every Sunday he was regularly to be found with his class of sixteen boys, upon whom he shed the light of his singular nature. Those boys were "rough 'uns" when they were first caught, but they soon sobered down, and in every known case became personally indebted to Gordon for a changed life. The Colonel would never take the chair except on one occasion, when 300 of the parents of the boys were entertained at a tea-meeting. He carried self-effacement into the smallest details of life. Some of the poorer of those lads he would have to the Fort House, where he would feed and lodge them. Three or four of them had scarlet fever at his house, and the Colonel would sit with them far into the night, talking to them and soothing them until they fell asleep. "He entered," says Mr. Penman, "into all their concerns, caring nothing for himself. He cared only to make them happy and industrious, while his chief aim was to lead them to the Saviour."

'The Rev. W. Guest, who has very kindly interested himself in my efforts to find traces of Gordon's

example to the English people, says that the Colonel would enter homes infected with contagion and fever when others hesitated to go. He would often go to the workhouse, and walk with the old men in the yard without a shadow of assumption. He was wont not only to give tobacco to the old fellows, and tea to the crones, but kept up his gifts after he left Gravesend. With him out of sight was not out of mind. He would write to a washer-woman and send her his photograph with a great deal more suavity of manner than that he has displayed to the Prime Minister of England.'

His Work in the Sunday-School. — Mr. George Littlemore, who worked with Gordon twenty years ago as a Sunday-school teacher at Gravesend, gives an interesting reminiscence in the *Congregationalist.* It was a mission school in an outlying part of the town, begun by a few young men and women whose funds were limited; and two rooms of a private house over an archway, next door to a ginshop, had to do duty for a school. Gordon would sit on a low form in one of these crowded rooms, teaching a group of urchins on a summer afternoon in a temperature sufficient to parboil any except the thickest-skinned. It was against the traditions to hand over the best classes to any supernumerary, however distinguished; hence it came to pass that some of the youngest children fell to the Colonel's care. Once only was he prevailed upon to address the whole school. He stood upon the staircase, that the

scholars in the two rooms, which were one above the other, might all hear him. None of the teachers knew of the work he had done in China or what fame he had achieved: they knew him only as the 'Colonel' who lived in 'Fort House,' and who was ready for every good work. But had they known it, it would have been impossible, says Mr. Littlemore, for them to have been overawed by his presence, for he was as modest as a child. And yet, standing on those rickety stairs, a hero disguised in the simple morning dress of a plain English gentleman, one could not fail to mark in that fine head, determined chin, and well-knit frame the presence of an uncommon man. His little sermon was slowly uttered, with considerable hesitation, and now and again he would pause for the right word. His voice was delightfully sweet and low.

In the Ragged-School.—Gordon's class in the ragged-school at Gravesend consisted of upwards of a dozen lads, some of whom he had himself ferreted out and brought to the school. Their parents were mostly of no occupation, or in some way served the boats on the river. Not a few of the lads were employed on shrimp-boats or in the chalk-pits. They were the very roughest and poorest in the community, but it was remarkable how entire was the control their teacher had over them. Not only did he teach the lads at the school on Sunday evenings,—he had them also at his own house every day in the week, feeding and

instructing them. Four or five of the poorest and most miserable he kept in his home altogether, feeding and clothing them. They employed their time in the garden, in chopping wood, and running errands. It was in the January of 1868 that Gordon, at his own request, was elected a teacher in this school; and from that date down to the end of 1871, when he left the garrison, he was most regular in his attendance every Sunday evening. When official duty made it impossible for him to attend himself, he never failed either to send a substitute or a note to the superintendent asking him to get a supply.

Pensioners and Pupils.—A full account of the beneficent work at Gravesend has been published by Mr. W. E. Lilley, with the approval of Miss Gordon, who, in a brief preface, attests the truth and faithfulness of the report. The cases given of his attention to the sick and the poor are such as every faithful minister or district visitor is familiar with; but the wonder was to see a man like Gordon, in his spare hours, engaged in numerous and various departments of charity and beneficence, each of which might have filled an ordinary man's whole day. Mission work, Sunday-school teaching, ragged-school teaching, the workhouse infirmary, engaged his attention; but his chief delight was in looking after the poor neglected lads, whom he brought to his own house to tame and teach and train for useful work in life. He not only prepared them for situations in shops or

warehouses, in barges or ships, but provided their outfit, or paid premiums when necessary to start them. Not the least interesting pages of Mr. Lilley's book are those containing extracts of letters from the Colonel, inquiring after lads whom he had known at Gravesend. He cared for them all, as well as for the many dependants and pensioners whom he had helped by his bounty. Here are some specimens of the letters:—

'SOUTHAMPTON, 26-9-71.

'I want you to do something for me, viz., look in now and then at Mrs. Patrick's, No. 1, Esther Place, St. John Street, and ask after Martin and Patrick. If you see the lads Bowen, Birls, Ridley, let me know how they get on; also the Palmers.'

The next letter is mainly in reference to an old gardener, whom he retained out of pure kindness, after age and infirmities had rendered him incapable of much service. He went by the *sobriquet* of the 'Old Bird,' and generally slept quietly in the greenhouse during the afternoons.

'SOUTHAMPTON, 5-10-71.

'Please read the enclosed: by it you will see that W—— will take C—— on at 7s. a week. Will you see Mrs.—— and ask her to give him the complement of 10s. a week, viz., 3s.? I want him to get 10s. a week. . . . . I saw Jack D—— at Winchester, and wrote to his colonel about him. He embarks for Halifax to-morrow. Every one

speaks very highly of him; tell his mother of this, and that I feel sure that he will get his commission.'

'GALATZ, *20th Nov.*, 1871.

'My dear Mr. L—— . . . . I often think of my people and kind friends at Gravesend. Let me know if I can help any one. I am glad of your success at Horton Kirby—dear little fellows! When I see an English vessel I look at it with great feeling. The people here are in a semi-civilised state. It is odd in the Delta to see the Russian Willie W——'s, with their joy at a large sturgeon being landed; it reminds one of Gravesend.'

'GALATZ, *23rd March*, 1872.

'I wish I could take a run round the forts and see the old faces. . . . Remember me to A—— and all my old friends; dear old people, I often wish I was among them again; here there is a dearth of all sorts of work of that nature. . . . Glad to hear of B——; let me know if any money is wanted, and I will see what I can do.'

'GALATZ, *7th April*, 1872.

'Will you thank Ridley for his note, and give him 25s., which I enclose? I am glad he has joined the volunteers, and hope they will get some place for cricket. Remember me to Birls, who, I hope, keeps at S——'s; also to Bowen. If you see the Kiltys, who live in Brewer's Yard, tell the lads that they do not do up the cement casks tight, for

a lot of the cement comes out. It is odd to see the Knight, Bevan, & Sturge cement casks out here in such numbers; and how often have I seen the lads doing up the casks at Northfleet! . . .

'With respect to boys going to sea, use my name as much as you like: there are lots of English vessels coming out here, and I would not mind paying something for the lads if the captains would take them.'

Professional Duties.—These beneficent works, it must be remembered, were only his recreations. He was most laborious and painstaking in his engineering duties, superintending the construction of the Thames forts and defences. Mr. Arthur Stannard, who served under him for two years on this duty, tells us how strict he was in keeping every one up to work, and to time, the value of which he often inculcated by precept as well as by the example of his own regularity and punctuality: 'When Gordon *was* at work, there was never any mistake about it; and woe to the man who then kept him waiting for anything a moment longer than was absolutely necessary. "Another five minutes gone! We shall never have them again!" he would say at such times. And a whole world of meaning lay in the words when he was the speaker; infinitely more telling they were than the more vigorous English in which most men give vent to growing impatience.' His strict discipline did not prevent every one who worked with him from regarding their chief with the utmost respect and affection.

Remembered at Gravesend.—It is pleasant to know that the inhabitants of Gravesend cherish a grateful and warm remembrance of him who laboured among them. They intend to have their own special memorial, in a people's recreation-ground and a home for training poor lads—a form of beneficence which Gordon loved to engage in. A letter from Miss Gordon touchingly refers to this in acknowledging an address of condolence. She says: 'Will you kindly convey to his Worship the Mayor and the inhabitants of the borough of Gravesend my grateful thanks for their truly kind expression of sympathy and condolence offered to my relatives and myself in this time of great trial on the death of my dear brother, General Gordon? I can say in truth I believe some of his happiest days were spent in Gravesend, where he enjoyed his work and the quiet he found there. Had he returned to this country, I would have liked him to take up his work there again; but it was not to be. Many of his Gravesend friends know well how he longed to depart, to be "For ever with the Lord," a hymn he so liked. I am so thankful for his last words in what he tells me will be his last letter—"I am quite happy,"—and this at a time he knew the fate he must expect makes it the greater cause for gratitude. I have constantly stayed with him at Gravesend, and always have and shall continue to take deep interest in its welfare.—In the name of my relatives and myself I beg to remain, yours truly, A. GORDON.

The ragged-school at Gravesend possesses some

valuable mementoes of General Gordon in the shape of four flags captured by the 'Ever Victorious Army' from the Taepings. Great store is of course set upon them, and they are only produced when the annual meeting of the school is held, or the youngsters have their annual festival. The name of the good Colonel will be ever fresh in this scene of his early happy labours.

General Sir Gerald Graham says: 'I remember Gordon well during his time at Gravesend, where he did so much for poor boys, and feel convinced that, of all ways of cherishing his memory, that most to his liking would be the maintenance of the "Gordon's Boys' Home."'

In the Service of the Khedive Ismail.—It was amidst universal regret that Gordon's residence at Gravesend came to an end. He received the appointment of English member of the International Commission for regulating the navigation of the mouths of the Danube, where in this service he met at Constantinople, in 1872, Nubar Pasha, the ablest of the Khedive Ismail's Ministers. The term of Sir Samuel Baker's governorship of the Equatorial Provinces of Egypt was then ending, and Gordon was appointed his successor, for which he got permission from the home authorities. He was asked to name his own terms. His predecessor had £10,000 per annum—not a large amount for a post of so much responsibility and risk. Gordon refused to take more than £2,000. His motive in accepting the office was to do what he could to check the

infamous slave traffic of these regions, and to open them up to legitimate commerce and orderly government. He knew the perilous and arduous nature of the work he undertook. The whole region over which his authority was to extend was in the hands of powerful slave-dealers, with fortified factories and bands of armed men for carrying on the slave trade. The peaceful peasants and cultivators of the Soudan were oppressed and impoverished by the Egyptian pashas, whom the Khedive now professed (chiefly in order to keep up appearances with civilised Europe) to wish to check and reduce to orderly government.

For the wonderful story of Gordon's career as Governor of the Equatorial Provinces, and afterwards of the whole of the Soudan, we must refer to the interesting work by Dr. Birkbeck Hill, *Colonel Gordon in Central Africa*. The volume is mainly composed of Gordon's own letters, with only a slight editorial thread of narrative. The general result of his administration has been thus summarised :—

'From the beginning of 1874 until 1879 he governed the vast region of the Blacks with satisfaction to the Cairo administration, which was extremely hard to please, and with credit to himself. He did much to restore the finances, and he inaugurated the necessary measures for the ultimate abolition of domestic slavery and the slave trade. He firmly established the power of the Khedive on the Nile by the use of steamers, in Darfour by the overthrow of Zebehr's son Suleiman, and on the

Abyssinian frontier by a treaty with King John. He gained at the same time a high reputation among the people by his justice and courage. He had that great merit in the eyes of an Eastern people of being always accessible; and he inspired his soldiers with something of his own inexhaustible ardour and confidence. His rule in the Soudan was glorious to himself, satisfactory even to the Khedive, and gratifying to Englishmen, as a practical demonstration of the qualities which they must wish to see most common among their countrymen. When it closed, there was no one to carry on the work he had so well begun, and the vast region which he had almost wrested from the hands of the slave-dealers was allowed to lapse into their possession. The apathy or selfish designs of the Egyptian officials allowed matters to reach such a pass within their jurisdiction that the power of the Mahdi had become formidable, and had been granted time to consolidate itself almost before the outer world was aware of his existence. When General Gordon left the Soudan the public peace was undisturbed, and the tranquillity of the Khedive's latest acquisitions seemed assured.

'When at Khartoum he was on one occasion installed with a royal salute and an address was presented, and in return he was expected to make a speech. His speech was as follows:—"With the help of God I will hold the balance level." The people were delighted, for a level balance was to them an unknown boon. And

he held it level all through his long and glorious reign, which lasted, with one small break, from February, 1874, until August, 1879.

'During these five years and a half he had traversed every portion of the huge territory which was placed under him—provinces extending all the way to the Equatorial lakes. Besides riding through the deserts on camels and mules 8,490 miles in three years, he made many long journeys by river. He conveyed a small steamer up the Nile as far as Lake Albert Nyanza, and succeeded in floating her safely upon the waters of that inland sea. He had established posts all the way from Khartoum to Gondokoro, and reduced that enormous journey from one of fifteen months to only a few weeks.'

Mission to Abyssinia.—Before Gordon left the service of the Khedive, although his health was so broken that he ought to have at once hastened homeward, he undertook a mission to the King of Abyssinia. When he was setting out on his second expedition to the Soudan, in 1877, the Khedive Ismail Pasha had thus written to him:—'As Abyssinia for a great distance lies along the borders of the Soudan, I beg you, when you are on the spot, to look carefully into the state of affairs there; and I give you power, should you think well, to enter into negotiations with the authorities of that kingdom, to the end that a settlement may be arrived at of the matters in dispute between us and them.' This mission was one of extreme

personal danger and difficulty, and was undertaken purely from a feeling of good nature. The terms offered to King John were such as were not likely to please that irascible monarch, and it is tolerably certain that it was only the coolness and courage of the envoy that prevented the king from carrying out his threat of executing him. A rather sensational account has been printed of Gordon having seized a chair and placed it on a level with the king's throne, but he told a friend who showed him the statement that this never occurred. In his own simple language he said, 'It would have been both rude and foolish.' He says that the story must have arisen from his having told the king's interpreter that he did not fear him, for 'The king's heart is in the hands of the Lord, as the rivers of water; He turneth it whithersoever He will.' He also told the king that death would be a great blessing to him personally, and that therefore he did not fear it. He was subjected, however, to insult and exposed to perils through the ill-will of the king and of his lieutenant Aloula, and was for a time guarded as a prisoner. 'I do not write the details of my misery,' he wrote. 'Thank God, they are over.' He was allowed to depart, and returned to Egypt. By this time Ismail had been deposed, and Tewfik had succeeded him as Khedive. The pashas hated the honest, upright Englishman, who would be a hindrance to their wrongdoing, and Gordon saw that Tewfik would have small power to check them. His health was utterly broken, and the medical advisers at Alex-

andria urged his immediate return home. Part of the spring of 1880 he spent at Lausanne, with the sons of his brother Enderby Gordon, who had lately died. In the winter of that year he was at Southampton.

Gordon in Ireland.—Early in 1880, Gordon also paid a visit to Ireland. He was curious to ascertain from his own inspection the condition of the people. One thing he was convinced of—that, from whatever causes, the peasantry as a whole, in the south of Ireland, were more miserably lodged, fed, and clothed than those of any country he had ever seen. He had never realised the abject, hopeless poverty of the mass of the Irish country people. He gave his opinions with his usual frankness in a letter published in the *Times*, with some suggestions of his own. He thought that if the State became owner of part of the land, and let it out on easy terms, there would be a chance of improvement. This might not be in accordance with strict rules of political economy, but the condition of the people required extraordinary efforts to relieve them; and as to the cost of the remedy, a nation which did not grudge £20,000,000, he said, for the blacks in the West Indies might devote as much for the poor Irish. He deeply pitied their condition. Just before leaving Dublin some case of great distress came to his notice. He emptied his purse to relieve the sufferers, and had to borrow from a friend his fare to London.

General Gordon and Lord Ripon.—In May, 1881, General Gordon, receiving no appointment in his own profession, and chafing at being unoccupied, accepted the office of private secretary to the newly appointed Governor-General of India, the Marquis of Ripon. His friends were naturally surprised at his consenting to act in a capacity of a subordinate kind, and were little surprised on hearing that he had tendered his resignation almost immediately on reaching Bombay. The fact was, however, that the office of private secretary to the Viceroy was one of great responsibility and influence, and Gordon at first, no doubt, thought that he would have full scope for his energetic method of working. As soon as he had time to consider the matter more closely, he was sensible that he had put himself into a false position. With Lord Ripon personally he had only the most cordial relations, and he highly honoured his chief for his character and good purposes in his lofty station. But he saw that the routine of Indian government was such as did not admit of the independent and fearless method with which he would have urged reformation of abuses. In a private letter, explaining his resignation, he said: 'In a moment of weakness I took the appointment. No sooner had I landed in Bombay than I saw that, in my irresponsible position, I could not hope to do anything to the purpose, in the face of the vested interests out there. Seeing this, and seeing, moreover, that my views were so diametrically opposed to those of the official classes, I resigned.

Lord Ripon's position was certainly a great consideration with me. It was assumed by some that my views of the state of affairs were the Viceroy's; and thus I felt that I should do him harm by staying with him. We parted perfect friends. The brusqueness of my leaving was inevitable, inasmuch as my stay would have put me in possession of secrets of State, which—considering my decision eventually to leave—I ought not to know. Certainly, I might have stayed for a month or two, had a pain in the head, and gone quietly; but the whole duties were so distasteful, that I felt, being perfectly callous as to what the world says, that it was better to go at once.'

In a letter to an Indian newspaper, Gordon said: 'Men at times form judgments which they afterwards repent of. This was my case in accepting the appointment Lord Ripon honoured me in offering me. I repented of my act as soon as I had accepted the appointment, and I deeply regret that I had not the moral courage to say so at that time. Nothing could have exceeded the kindness and consideration with which Lord Ripon has treated me. I have never met any one with whom I could have felt greater sympathy in the arduous task he has undertaken.'

It is very gratifying to have this testimony to Lord Ripon from a man of Gordon's clear insight and honest judgment. It is not so satisfactory to hear of 'the vested interests' and 'the views of the official classes,' to which Gordon felt he must be

opposed. A writer in the *Times* has revealed one of the points on which Gordon differed from others in his judgment upon documents furnished to the Viceroy. At the time of his arrival in India, one of the chief political topics was whether Yakoob Khan, then a prisoner in honourable confinement at Murree, was guilty of connivance in the Cabul massacre, or not. As the Viceroy's private secretary, Gordon saw the documents sent from Cabul in support of the charge against the Ameer, and he declared that they failed to substantiate the accusation. Other men would have stopped at that point, but not Gordon. He carried out the reasoning to the logical conclusion—if Yakoob Khan was not guilty, he should never have been deposed, and he ought to be restored to his country. The impossibility of accepting this conclusion may be asserted, but the fact shows the consistency of Gordon's character, and redounds to his credit. It is satisfactory also to know that the officials of the Indian Foreign Office afterwards termed the documents sent from Cabul 'worthless trash.' If it be true that Yakoob Khan was wrongfully deposed, no wonder that the present Ameer is anxious to keep in favour with England! The incident shows the necessity for the utmost justice and caution in our dealings with native questions. The right of England to hold and to rule India may be, in the world's view, the right of conquest; but in the sight of Heaven our moral right exists in the British rule being for the good of the native people of India; and our true defence

against foreign invasion is our being the instruments of spreading the influence of Christianity in our Eastern Empire. If Gordon thought that official life in India sought mainly its personal comfort or aggrandisement, he is not likely to have been a passive onlooker. He rightly judged that his zeal for reforming abuses might bring unpopularity to the Viceroy, who has been censured enough for the little he was able to do for native rights against vested interests. It is gratifying to observe that among the tributes paid to the memory of Gordon, none were more hearty than that of Lord Ripon, who spoke of him as 'that great man, General Gordon, whose courageous and simple character bore the true heroic stamp. His undaunted courage, his devotion to duty, his absolute spirit of self-sacrifice, and his unwavering trust in God, had won for him a place in the heart of every man and woman in the country.' This was said at Leeds, February 8, 1885, when all were saddened by the news from Khartoum, and while the fate of Gordon was yet uncertain.

Gordon's Second Visit to China.—When Gordon had thrown up his appointment as secretary to Lord Ripon, he was uncertain whither to wend his way. At first he thought of sailing from Bombay across to Zanzibar, and seeing if he could be of use in helping to stop the slave trade on those coasts, for which the Sultan Syed Burghash had professed to be anxious. An invitation unexpectedly came from a former

friend, Mr. (now Sir) Robert Hart, the Chief Commissioner of Chinese Customs, to come to China. There was at that time a dispute between China and Russia as to affairs in Kashgar, and war seemed imminent. It is probable that Gordon's old friend, Li-Hung-Chang, now one of the chief members of the Imperial Council, was anxious to get his support in advocating a peace policy, and if war should be unavoidable, to obtain his services as a trusted commander. Mr. Hart's message was brief: 'I am directed to invite you here. Please come and see for yourself. This opportunity for doing really useful work on a large scale ought not to be lost. Work, position, conditions, can all be arranged with yourself to your satisfaction.' It may be that the highest Imperial authority was behind this message; at all events, Gordon knew the upright character of Mr. Hart, and he telegraphed to say he would come. 'As for conditions, Gordon indifferent,' was the characteristic ending of the telegram.

He had to telegraph home for permission to act according to circumstances on arriving at China. Being asked for fuller explanations, which he could not afford, and knowing the importance of prompt action, he thought it would simplify matters if he resigned his commission in the British army. The military authorities, to their credit, refused to accept his resignation, and gave him permission to visit China, on condition that he should accept no military service. This

condition may have been deemed prudent, but, Gordon, without directly pledging his promise, sent a reply which most strongly presents the character of the man. 'My fixed design,' he said, 'is to persuade the Chinese not to go to war with Russia, both in their own interests and those of the world, and especially in those of England. To me it appears that the question in dispute cannot be of such vital importance that an arrangement could not be come to by concession on both sides. Whether I succeed or not is not in my hands.' He also expressed his anxious desire to see peace secured.

Meeting with Governor Li.—Gordon left for China on June 10, and from Hong-Kong went to Tientsin to meet Li-Hung-Chang, who was overjoyed to see his old friend and comrade-in-arms. On July 27 he sent a telegram to the War Office, in which he said: 'I have seen Li-Hung-Chang, and he wishes me to stay with him. I cannot desert China in her present crisis, and would be free to act as I think fit. I therefore beg to resign my commission in Her Majesty's service.' Again the resignation was refused, but his leave of absence was cancelled. This order met him at Shanghai, whither he had returned, after successfully throwing the weight of his honoured advice in favour of peace. He had given to the Chinese Government also most valuable suggestions as to improving their army, and laying down general principles for their

guidance in case of foreign invasion. He said afterwards that he had little faith in his instructions being carried out, from his experience of the slovenliness of Chinese soldiers, when not sharply looked after by European officers. He had, however, tided the Government over its present difficulties, and had the satisfaction of knowing his journey had not been in vain.

The cancelling of his leave nettled him, and caused a display of his natural sharpness of temper, as appeared in his acknowledgment of the message from the War Office: 'You might have trusted me. My passage from China was taken before the arrival of telegram of August 14, which states leave cancelled, etc. Do you still insist on rescinding the same?' The brief reply was, 'Leave granted to February 28.' Before that date he was back in England.'

In the Mauritius.—An engineer officer, appointed the Commanding Royal Engineer in the Mauritius, wished to avoid going, for personal and family reasons. He asked Gordon if he would go, if the matter could be arranged. To oblige his brother officer, Colonel Gordon went. Although purchase in the army is abolished, exchanges are allowed, and under ordinary circumstances a large sum would be paid in consideration of what Gordon did. But he refused to take anything, and went out, with no motive but doing a kindly favour to his brother officer.

Gordon's Theory on the Site of the Garden of Eden.—His letters from the Mauritius show how observant he was of all that passed under his notice. He wrote some useful hints as to the best means of keeping command of the Indian seas. He paid a visit to the Seychelles Islands, with the beauty of which he was so struck that he said, 'I verily believe I have found the site of the Garden of Eden.' He thought these islands were the remaining portion of a larger region, now submerged. His theory on the subject, and on the river Pisōn being the Nile, formerly ending in the Red Sea, will be found in the Quarterly Statement of the Palestine Exploration Fund, for April, 1885.

In the Cape Colony and Basutoland.—This period of his public career is at first sight the most barren of successful enterprise, and indeed is spoken of by one of his biographers as 'his first failure.' We look upon it in a very different light. There is no episode in his remarkable career in which the independent and generous character of the man is more conspicuous, and therefore it deserves fuller notice than it has generally received.

While still in Mauritius the disturbed state of affairs in South Africa, and especially the troubles in Basutoland, arrested Gordon's attention. He therefore was prepared to send a telegram to the Premier of the Cape Government, offering his services for two years 'to assist in terminating war and administering Basutoland.' Before he went

to the Mauritius, when he was enjoying a brief period of rest at Lausanne, he had received, through the War Office in London, an offer from the Government at the Cape of the command of the Colonial forces, with a salary of £1,500 per annum. This offer he had declined, but the state of affairs in South Africa led him to reconsider the matter; and in March, 1882, a telegram came from the Premier of the Cape Government, accepting his offer to go and assist in terminating the Basuto war and administering Basutoland. Sir Hercules Robinson, the Governor at the Cape, had previously obtained from the home authorities permission for Gordon to accept the post. It is singular that Gordon had in the previous year had an offer of employment by the then Premier at the Cape, which was declined by him. His presence now in Mauritius, and his appointment there being about to terminate, the revival of this opportunity appeared almost like a providential call, and he went to the Cape, naming also for his pay a sum less than half of what had previously been offered to him. This was just like him. He thought he could be of use in South Africa, and the previous offer having passed through the War Office, he knew that he would be at liberty to undertake the work.

On March 6, 1882, he had been made a Major-General, and on April 4 he left Mauritius for Cape Town. On arriving there, after a tedious voyage of a month in a sailing vessel, he was put in command of the Colonial forces;

but the administration of Basutoland, which had been his chief object, was refused to him. Sir Hercules Robinson, the Governor, and the Premier explained that the removal of the present administrator in Basutoland would not be acceptable at the Cape. Gordon was disappointed, but, with his usual conscientious spirit, proceeded to attend to his duties as Commander. He expected that he would probably after a time be entrusted with the administrative work for which he was more especially fitted. At the request of the Premier he drew up a report on the Colonial forces, and suggested improvements, which were not carried out, although he showed how a large increase of the army and far greater efficiency could be effected at diminished cost. If this required economy in other directions where money was misapplied, he showed his own disinterestedness by accepting only two-thirds of the salary of his own command.

At length the danger on the frontier grew so threatening that Gordon was requested to go up-country and ascertain the facts as to the inroads of the Boers from the Orange Free State, and as to the causes of discontent among the Basutos. This was early in June. In a very few weeks he understood all the circumstances and conditions of the case. He drew up a report, in which he stated plainly that the Basutos were driven to rebellion by what he deemed the mistaken policy of Colonial administrators and magistrates. On this the Government requested him to offer suggestions as to removing or lessening the grievances.

This he did; but neither his report nor his suggested remedies received any attention from the Cape Government. They sought his advice, but with the intention of following it only if it accorded with their own plans. Gordon was deeply interested in what he saw of the Basutos. He expressed strongly his admiration of their qualities, if rightly guided; and he also stated his opinion that they ought never to have been transferred to the rule of the Cape Colony without their own consent. They were true to England, and a representative of the Queen of England would always find them peaceful, faithful, and loyal.

Interest in the Basutos.—Who are these Basutos in whom Gordon took so warm an interest, and whose welfare he earnestly sought? Some knowledge of them ought to be in the possession of all Englishmen, for they are a noble people, and will assuredly play an important part in the future of South Africa. They belong to the great Kaffir race—one of the two races forming the bulk of the native population in Cape Colony and its dependencies. The other typical race is the Hottentot. The Kaffirs are well-nigh as superior to the Hottentots as is the Caucasian race to the Mongolian; and of the Kaffirs the Basutos are among the most numerous, and are certainly the most advanced in civilisation. How they came to be so, a very brief statement will show.

About fifty years ago the hereditary chief of the

tribe was Moshesh, known as 'The Chief of the Mountain.' This name he obtained because he had formed a fortress on a mountain, as a place of security during the wars that continually raged in those times. With his own tribal chiefs he had frequent conflicts in defence of his hereditary sovereignty, but a more serious danger assailed him when a renowned warrior, Moselekatsi, launched hordes of hostile Kaffirs on the fertile lands of the Basutos. It was then that Moshesh found refuge in his mountain fastness, named Thaba Bosio. The progress of Moselekatsi was checked, and he was afterwards driven by the Boers beyond the river Limpopo, into what is now called Matabele-land.

Moshesh was a man of most remarkable character. Personally brave and fearless, he disliked war, and longed for peace and tranquillity. He had heard of the labours of Dr. Moffat and other missionaries in adjoining regions, especially among the Korannas, a people with whom he had been at war, but who now seemed to live peaceably. He sent an embassy to the chief of the Korannas, with a present of oxen, and a request that he would send to the Basutos 'a man of prayer, and teacher of the Christian religion.' Some of the missionaries of the French Société Evangélique heard of this request, this society having recently established mission stations in that region of South Africa. So they crossed the Orange River, regarding this as an opening, in God's providence, to a new field of labour. Moshesh received them

gladly, and chose the site for their first station at the base of his mountain fortress.

It is not necessary to narrate the progress of the mission; suffice it to say, that for nearly twenty years the work was carried on peacefully and successfully. Mr. Casalis, one of the early French missionaries, on leaving Basutoland, to take the office of director of the mission-house of the society in Paris, published an account of the first twenty years of evangelistic work in Africa. There were ten or twelve mission stations, with churches and schools; there were some hundreds of true Christian converts; and although the number of Church members here, as everywhere, bore but a small proportion to the population, the entire people was influenced by the new teaching. The king remained a firm friend of the missionaries; heathen customs were gradually growing obsolete; the arts of peaceful agriculture and commerce were cultivated. 'The country,' says Mr. Casalis, 'is now covered with hamlets surrounded by fields in a high state of civilisation. The natives, without neglecting their former productions, have generally adopted the culture of our cereals and principal fruit trees. The quantity of corn annually harvested far exceeds the consumption of the inhabitants, and the surplus is easily disposed of in the Colony.'

In 1852 a sudden calamity occurred, but it arose from error, and was overruled for good. The British troops engaged in quelling the Kaffir war, then raging on the Cape frontier, had their

attention turned to Basutoland. Some enemy represented to Sir George Cathcart (then commander of the British forces in Africa, the same who afterwards fell at Inkerman) that Moshesh was a crafty aggressive chief, and that his mountain fortress was a centre of Kaffir intrigue. The result was an assault by British forces on Thaba Bosio, in which they suffered a severe repulse. Sir George Cathcart was resolved to renew the attack, when his resentment was disarmed by the following strange message from Moshesh, received on the morning after his defeat:—'O my master, I am still your servant; I am still the child of the Queen. Sometimes a man beats his dog, and the dog puts his teeth into his hand, and gives him a bite; nevertheless, the dog loves the master, and the master loves the dog, and will not kill it. I am vexed at what happened yesterday; let it be forgotten.' Sir George Cathcart was a truly gallant soldier, who could understand and appreciate this message from a noble savage, as some would call him. The hostility was at an end, and in his report, after the fight, Sir George expressed his pleasure in having 'made the acquaintance of the chief Moshesh, whom I found not only to be the most enlightened, but the most upright chief in South Africa, and one in whose good faith I put the most perfect confidence, and for whom, therefore, I have a sincere respect and regard.' Sir George Cathcart learned also to know and appreciate the French missionaries in Basutoland, and bore honourable testimony to the good work

they had done, and represented them as 'loyally disposed towards the British Government, and sincere well-wishers to, and promoters of, the cause of peace.'

Two years later than this, in 1854, Great Britain recognised the independence of the Free or Orange State, the motive being chiefly to get rid of the responsibility of managing the troublesome Boers, just as has been done in recent times in admitting the independence of the Transvaal. Greater troubles have in both cases followed than would have resulted from a firmer and more courageous, as well as more generous policy If the welfare of the native races had been properly regarded by the Imperial Government, the turbulent Boers would never have dared to defy the British power, the rule of the Queen being associated by the natives with justice, clemency, and peace. The Kaffir races are able to take care of themselves, if they have arms in their hands; and since the destruction of the military power of the Zulu kings, nothing had to be feared from other border tribes, least of all from the civilised and Christianised Basutos. But these have been exposed to perpetual insult and wrong by Boer marauders, who covet and seize their land and property. The presence of a British Resident alone gave them some protection and confidence. Moshesh, their great chief, lived till March 11, 1870. Before his departure he thought he saw a brighter future for his land and people. His last words to the missionaries were: 'You have shown me the way, and I shall go

to Jesus.' His last instructions were: 'Let the missionaries not be weary to teach my people, and especially my sons.'

Feeling of Basutos towards England.—We have before us the official report of the proceedings of the 'Pitso,' or annual gathering of the Basutos, held before the outbreak of the Basuto war. This Pitso, or Folkmote, as we might call it, was held at Maseru, on October 16 and 17, 1879. The number of chiefs and other leading natives was unusually large, and the greatest enthusiasm for the Queen of England, 'our mother,' was shown throughout the whole proceedings. It was Gordon's advice that this loyal feeling, which had been slightly checked during the later troubles, should be fostered, and he recommended that a Resident representing the Crown should live among the Basutos.

But we must pass from this subject, in case of trenching on disputed points of Colonial policy.

Sympathy with Native Tribes.—From the first Gordon warmly sympathised with the natives, and objected to armed force being regarded as the true remedy. He writes (September 30, 1882): 'I state that it is to me impossible to act against natives who I believe are being treated unjustly. The Secretary for Native Affairs has admitted certain of these abuses, but it needs more than that admission to satisfy my conscience.' It was because Gordon took these views that eventually he resigned his

appointment. We have a speech of Gordon to the Basuto chief Masupha, which is eminently characteristic of his dealings with savage peoples. He said: 'I have come here as a friend of the Basutos. I showed myself a friend, for when asked to come and fight, I would not. Now, when I come, I want first to do good for Basutos. The Basutos are of a good disposition. I say to the chief and people, How can Basutoland belong to Basutos? I tell all that the Government want to do good to the people. The Queen does not want the Colony to take land of Basutos, and what the Colony and the Queen are afraid of is that if abandoned the Basutos would be eaten up. I like the Boers; they are brave, and like their own government; and when they fought, they fought for their own government. England could have beaten the Boers if they liked, but thought it unjust. Which do Basutos think Dutch like best —Basutos or land? I think they like land best. Supposing Colony abandoned this country, by-and-by they have trouble with Free State; after that begins fighting; then I look forward ten years, and I see Dutch farms close here. I do not want that, the Colony does not, and the Queen does not, and no Basuto either. Then I say, Basutos, make friends with the Government. . . .

'Suppose Boers drive you away, for me it would be all the same, and not much difference when you are put in the ground. I wish the Basutos would do what I say. What I want is for all to speak with one tongue. I cannot make myself black. I cannot make Masupha and his people do what I

want, so I leave it to Jesus, who works everything. This is all I have to say—Do what you like; think well; pray to Jesus for advice.'

Gordon and Masupha.—In proof of his interest in the Basutos, and of his sense of the importance of winning their loyalty and friendship, he offered to go to live with the chief Masupha, alone, for two years, with a salary of only £300 a year! Truly a noble offer of self-sacrifice.

It will be hardly credited, but it is true, that while Gordon was the guest of Masupha, and in his power, some emissaries from the Cape urged Letsea, the chief paramount in Basutoland, to attack Masupha. The chief was shrewd enough to see that Gordon had no part in this treachery and baseness, and, with true magnanimity, he treated Gordon with increased deference and hospitality. These are the men we are now allowing to drift from loyalty to England, and throwing into the hands of the Boers!

In the Holy Land.—After returning from South Africa, Gordon felt that he required thorough repose, both body and mind having been so long overstrained. He went to Palestine, and there remained during 1883. He lived in great seclusion, his chief companions being his Bible and the Ordnance Survey map. He occasionally saw the missionaries and other Christian friends, but it was his chief delight to take solitary rambles over 'those holy fields.'

Some of his topographical researches, and his meditations on portions of the Holy Scriptures, are recorded in the little book, *Reflections in Palestine*, the manuscript of which he seems to have entrusted to Mr. Prebendary Barnes for publication. Some of these reflections are of a speculative kind, and do not show the sound judgment apparent in less perplexing questions. He wrote letters to his family and to his friends, some of the latter showing how much his thoughts were still engaged with the affairs of Egypt and the Soudan. He foresaw the consequences of the oppression of the Soudanese by the Egyptian pashas and Bashi-Bazouks. Raouf Pasha was sent by the Khedive to Khartoum as successor to Gordon, and the old abuses reappeared in full strength. He still expressed hope that the result of the throwing off of the Egyptian rule would ultimately help on the suppression of slave-holding and the slave trade. He does not seem yet to have heard of the new element of Moslem fanaticism which was to combine with the slave-dealing interest in raising a serious revolt in the Soudan and in the Equatorial Provinces of Egypt.

Visits to Jerusalem.—During his stay in Palestine he was engaged in other ways than penning his *Reflections* and verifying ancient sites. Dr. Cunningham Geikie, who was in Jerusalem after the tidings came of the fall of Khartoum, heard much about Gordon from friends who knew him. He says:—'A poor dragoman told me that General Gordon used to come often

to his house in Jerusalem when he and his wife lay ill, and that he would take a mat, and put it on the floor as a seat, there being no chairs or furniture, and sit down with his Testament to read and speak to them about Christ. Ascertaining that a doctor's account had been incurred, he went off secretly and paid it. He gave away all he had to the poor in Jerusalem and the villages round, and the people mourn for him as for their father.'

One of the letters shown to Dr. Geikie was from Khartoum, and is a most characteristic and interesting record, as expressing Gordon's own feeling at the post of danger, yet cheerily remembering his kind friends and his happy days at Jerusalem:

'KHARTOUM, 7-3-84.

'MY DEAR MRS.——,—I have been here since the 18th February, and think things look a little better than they did; but I have always fear of the uprising of the tribes in my rear. It is not the Mahdi I fear, but his letters and emissaries among our ignorant people. . . . . The revolt would be nothing if we had any forces at all, but these we lack, and I am (it is odd to write it) obliged to trust to God alone, as if He was not enough. Yet my human nature is so weak that I do worry myself at times about these things. What a strange set of inconsistent things we are; half flesh, half spirit; yet God works at us and shapes us like stones for His temple! That is the object and design of our existence. You and Mr. —— can

scarcely tell how torn I am between the two. "Is My hand shortened?" and "You have no possible way of escape," are continually contending one with another.

'How are little Julia and Charlie? I hope well, and as naughty as ever. I wish often I was back, quiet, and full of delightful thoughts, instead of thinking evil of every one, and not trusting in our dear Lord. How are the —— (a missionary and his wife); Miss —— and Co. (the lady superintendent at the hospital and her helpers); Hardigg, with his dreams (the hotel-keeper at Jaffa); Hassan, your Darfur man, and his cheeky wife? Do not think I forget you or Mr. ——. I am ever interceding for you and yours; for when Job (xlii. 10) prayed for his friends, God turned his captivity. Make little Julia ask our Lord to help me. In vain, indeed, is the help of man. Yet I have dared to ask that the sins of these peoples fall on me, *hid* in Christ.—Good-bye. Many thanks to you and Mr. —— for your prayers.—Yours sincerely, C. G. GORDON.'

Proposals to go to the Congo.—When Gordon was quietly resting in Palestine the offer was made to him to go to Central Africa as Governor of the territory of the Congo occupied by the International Association, of which the King of the Belgians is the head, and Mr. Stanley the moving spirit. It was probably Stanley who suggested Gordon's name as a man likely to carry out with energy the plans of the Association. His

deep desire to aid in any way in checking the slave trade and opening up Africa to peaceful industry and Christian civilisation led him to give favourable ear to the proposal. He returned to England, and was soon in communication with the King of the Belgians. He returned from Palestine at the end of 1883. Matters were soon arranged, and on January 16 he started for Brussels, to receive final instructions as to his proceedings, and in ten days was to start for the Congo. He had previously spent a few days bidding farewell to his friends. He was at Heavitree Vicarage, and on January 11 he received the Holy Communion in the parish church there. He paid a visit to Sir Samuel Baker at Sandford Orleigh, and then went to his sister's house at Southampton, where a telegram from Lord Wolseley came to request his presence in London, the message having been already sent to Heavitree. For several days public opinion had been declaring itself, and the question was asked with increasing urgency, Why should Gordon go to bury himself in Central Africa when he is the man to put matters right in Egypt? On the 15th he had an interview with Lord Wolseley, and next day he went to Brussels. On the 16th he started to see the King of the Belgians, and when at Brussels he received another telegram requesting his immediate return to London. The King was greatly disappointed at the probability of losing Gordon's services, but he felt that his first duty was to his own Queen and to England.

Gordon's own Account of his being sent to Khartoum.—In a letter to the Rev. R. H. Barnes, Vicar of Heavitree, dated 'At Sea, 22-1-84,' General Gordon gives his friend a brief account of his interview with the Cabinet. It is printed in the *Sketch of Gordon*, by Mr. Barnes: 'You must be told shortly what passed. You know Wolseley sent a telegram to me at your house, but I did not know it until Sunday. He said, "Come up at once." This telegram came when I was so bothered that I said to my sister, "I will fly on Wednesday, the 16th, to Brussels;" so I said to Wolseley, "I will come up on Tuesday, the 15th, and go to Brussels on 16th." I reached London at 2 p.m. Tuesday, stayed with Wolseley in Wolseley's office from 2 till 5 p.m., while he talked to Ministers. Nothing, however, came of it, so I said, "I will go to Brussels." I did not see Ministers. I consequently went to Brussels on Wednesday, and got there Wednesday night. At noon on Thursday I got telegram from Wolseley saying, "Come over at once;" so I saw the King, who did not like my going, and left Brussels at 8 p.m. Thursday, reaching London at 6 a.m. Friday. I saw Wolseley at 8 a.m. He said nothing was settled, but Ministers would see me at 3.30 p.m. No one knew I had come back. At noon he (Wolseley) came for me and took me to Ministers. He went in and talked to Ministers, and came back and said, "Her Majesty's Government want you to understand this—Government are determined to evacuate Soudan, for

they will not guarantee future government. Will you go and do it?" I said, "Yes." He said, "Go in." I went in and saw them. They said, "Did Wolseley tell you our orders?" I said, "Yes." I said, "You will not guarantee future government of Soudan, and you wish me to go up to evacuate now." They said, "Yes;" and it was over, and I left at 8 p.m. for Calais. Very little passed between us. The Duke and Wolseley came to see me off, so that it is over.

'The day after to-morrow I reach (D.V.) Port Said, and go through Canal on to Suakin by Her Majesty's ship Carysfort, and reach that (D.V.) on my birthday. I am quite restored to my peace, thank God, and in His hand He will hide me. You and I are equally exposed to the attacks of the enemy; me not a bit more than you are. Kindest love to you all. I am sorry not to have time to write you graphic details. Lord Granville thanked me for going, very nicely. Government are right, if they will not guarantee future government of Soudan, to evacuate it. Good-bye. Kindest regards to the Temples, Bowering, Blackmore, and you all.—Yours sincerely, my dear friend, C. G. GORDON.'

The route by Suakin and Berber was not taken, it being thought advisable that Gordon should have an interview with the Khedive, and have consultations with Sir Evelyn Baring and other official personages. He went by the Nile to Korosko, thence across the desert to Abu Hamed, and from thence to Khartoum, where he arrived on February 18, 1884.

Sir Gerald Graham's Recollections.—Gordon's old friend and comrade, Sir Gerald Graham the hero of Tamai and El Teb, has given (in the *Fortnightly Review* of January, 1887) valuable personal recollections of this time. Graham was then at Cairo, and it was he who dissuaded Gordon from taking the Suakin route, by the following letter, dated January 23rd, 1884:—

'My dear Charlie,—Do come to Cairo. Wood (Sir Evelyn) will tell you much better than I why. Throw over all personal feeling, if you have any, and act like yourself with straightforward directness. You have no personal aims in this matter, and therefore no personal feelings must be allowed to interfere. Your object, I assume, is to get to Khartoum, and if so, Cairo is the route, not Suakin. By coming here you will see Baring and Nubar, and make all arrangements to facilitate your great enterprise, in which we all so earnestly wish you success. I shall be delighted to see you again, if only for a few minutes.—Sincerely yours,

'GERALD GRAHAM.'

Gordon arrived in Cairo on the 24th of January. General Graham records his recollections of the conversations, plans, and other incidents of the hurried interviews with his old friend. It is needless to revert to these things now, but there is deep interest in reading of the last journey and final parting of the two friends. Gordon asked Graham to accompany him in his voyage up the Nile from Cairo, which he did, beyond Assouan as far as Korosko.

'We reached Korosko on the evening of the 1st February, and the next morning was that for saying good-bye, as now Gordon entered the great Nubian Desert. That morning we had a long talk together after breakfast, when he told me what he meant to do, and how he felt for the misery of the natives. About eight o'clock he mounted his camel, and said good-bye, but I walked beside him, and he shortly afterwards got down and walked with me. At last I left him, saying, "good-bye" again, and "God bless you." Then he mounted again. A handsome young Arab, Ahmed, son of the Sheikh of Berber, rode beside him, on a beautiful white camel. At the head of the caravan rode Ahmed's brother, both being armed with the great cross-hilted swords, and shields of rhinoceros hide, which Soudan warfare has now made familiar. These swords, together with a couple of very old double-barrelled pistols with flint locks, made up the Arab armament. Gordon carried no arms, but Stewart had a revolver. Before Gordon left he gave me a long silver-mounted kourbash or Soudan riding-whip, of rhinoceros hide, and told me to say, "that was a token that the reign of the kourbash in the Soudan was over." In exchange he took my white umbrella, having lost his own.

'The place where I last saw Gordon is wild and desolate. The desert there is covered with a series of volcanic hills, with nothing between them but black basins or ravines, dry, dark and destitute of all vegetation. I mounted one of these hills, and with my glass watched Gordon and the small

caravan, as his camels threaded their way along a sandy valley, hoping he would turn round that I might give him one more sign; but he rode on till he turned the dark side of one of the hills, and I saw him no more. Sadly we returned to our steamer, and I felt a gloomy foreboding that I should never see Gordon again.'

State of Affairs in the Soudan.—It is not necessary to discuss the reasons for the English occupation of Egypt, or the policy of Gordon being sent to the Soudan. Apart from politics there has been nothing but admiration of the brave, patriotic soldier who undertook the mission entrusted to him. It was a position unsought, and almost thrust upon him. The revolt of the Egyptian army under Arabi had been put down by the bombardment of Alexandria, the victory of Tel-el-Kebir, and the capture of Cairo. But the troubles of the Khedive were as pressing as ever, and military disasters in the Soudan were added to civil and financial embarrassments in Egypt. The total annihilation of the Egyptian army under Hicks Pasha, the rapid increase of the power of the Mahdi, the capture of the Egyptian garrisons in Sinkat and Tokar, the threatened destruction of Kassala, Suakin, and other towns, brought matters to a crisis. If the Mahdi, flushed with success, and already master of Kordofan and Darfour, got possession of Khartoum, the capital of the Soudan, there might be nothing to bar his way to Lower Egypt.

Expectation of the Mahdi.—'When will the Mahdi come?' is, it seems, a proverbial phrase among Mohammedans in times of calamity and trouble—like the ancient Jewish aspiration for the coming of their Messiah. Of a future prophet and deliverer the Koran had given vague prediction, and at various times adventurers and impostors had claimed to be the promised reformer of Islamism and ruler of the faithful. In 1799, when the French were in occupation of Egypt, General Lefebvre slaughtered thousands of fanatics, who had been told by a Mahdi of that time that they would be invulnerable if they only threw dust at the French guns.

In our own time a rival Mahdi has put forth his claims—the chief of the Senoussi sect in Tripoli—who denounced the Soudan Mahdi, Mohammed Achmet, as an impostor.

Who was the Mahdi?—Mohammed Achmet was a native of Dongola, the son of a shipwright, formerly well known there. From his early youth he was fond of meditation and studying the Koran, rather than of working like his brothers; and his tastes were encouraged. He became the disciple of a fakir, or dervish, near Khartoum. In 1870 he took up his residence on an island, where he gained reputation as a learned and devout man. For a time he used this reputation only for selfish and sensual ends. He took wives from among the Arabs, and thus made many alliances, which he afterwards turned to account. After some years

he began to assume more ambitious claims, and declared himself to be the true Mahdi.

After Gordon had left Egypt the state of the Soudan was so troubled that the time became favourable for more open assertion of his alleged Divine commission. For several years he extended his influence, sometimes without much success; but in 1881 he had acquired power sufficient to defeat the forces sent by Raouf Pasha and by Abdul Kadir, and other rulers and generals, who became alarmed at the spread of the rebellion. The capture of El Obeid, and the submission of many of the Egyptian troops, attracted greater attention, and the defeat and destruction of the army of Hicks Pasha left the Mahdi master of the Soudan.

Gordon's Reception at Khartoum.—Gordon arrived at Khartoum on February 18. His arrival led to a wonderful demonstration of welcome by the people, thousands of them crowding to kiss his hands and feet, and calling him the 'Sultan of the Soudan.' Mr. Power, telegraphing the same day, says:—'His speech to the people was received with enthusiasm. He said, "I come without soldiers, but with God on my side, to redress the evils of the Soudan. I will not fight with any weapons but justice. There shall be no more Bashi-Bazouks." It is now believed that he will relieve the Bahr-Gazelle garrisons without firing a shot. Since they heard that he was coming the aspect of the people has so changed

that there are no longer any fears of disturbance in the town. They say that he is giving them more than even the Mahdi could give. He is sending out proclamations in all directions. Such is the influence of one man, that there are no longer any fears for the garrison or people of Khartoum.'

Changed Aspect of Affairs.—The Governor-General had been but a very short time in Khartoum before he saw how completely the state of affairs in the Soudan was changed. The remembrance of his own former rule kept the peaceable population quiet; but he had also many active, determined, and treacherous enemies. We cannot here refer to his request for Zebehr Pasha, his desire to pay the Mahdi a visit, or the charges of inconsistency made against him. He seems, rightly or wrongly, to have come to the conclusion that Khartoum ought, at all hazards, to be defended.

The Egyptian Garrison of Khartoum.—While communications were still maintained, although liable to constant interruption, General Gordon sent his account of his first action with the rebels, which showed not only the kind of enemy he had to deal with, but also the sort of men on whom he had to depend for the defence of Khartoum. On March 17 he described, in the following words, the action of the preceding day:—

'At 8 a.m. on the 16th, two steamers started for Halifaya. Bashi-Bazouks and some regulars

advanced across plain towards rebels. At 10 a.m. the regulars were in square opposite centre of rebels' position, and Bashi-Bazouks were extended in their line to their right. The gun with regulars then opened fire. Very soon after this a body of about sixty rebel horsemen charged down a little to the right of centre of Bashi-Bazouks' line. The latter fired a volley, then turned and fled. The horsemen galloped towards the square, which they immediately broke. The whole force then retreated slowly towards the fort with their rifles shouldered. The horsemen continued to ride along flanks, cutting off stragglers. The men made no effort to stand, and the gun was abandoned with sixty-three rounds and fifteen cases of reserve ammunition. The rebels advanced, and retreat of our men was so rapid that the Arabs on foot had no chance of attacking. Pursuit ceased about a mile from stockade and the men rallied. We brought in the wounded. Nothing could be more dismal than seeing these horsemen, and some men even on camels, pursuing close to troops who, with arms shouldered, plodded their way back.'

In fact, this fight was a massacre, as the Egyptian soldiers did not attempt the least resistance. Colonel Stewart, who commanded in person, was wounded. The two pashas under him were subsequently convicted of treachery, and executed.

Gordon's Despatches.—We must refer to the Blue-books for the despatches sent at various times from Khartoum; but it is only fair to quote two or

three, in order to show Gordon's own view of his position and duties. The last telegram that reached the Government from Khartoum before the telegraph was finally severed was dated—

'KHARTOUM, *April* 16, 1884, 5.15 P.M.

'As far as I can understand, the situation is this: you state your intention of not sending any relief up here or to Berber, and you refuse me Zebehr. I consider myself free to act according to circumstances. I shall hold on here as long as I can, and if I can suppress the rebellion I shall do so. If I cannot, I shall retire to the Equator, and leave you indelible disgrace of abandoning the garrisons of Senaar, Kassala, Berber, and Dongola, with the certainty that you will eventually be forced to smash up the Mahdi under great difficulties if you would retain peace in Egypt.'

He also represented the consequences of thus proclaiming the purpose of leaving him unsupported: 'In the present state of affairs it is impossible to withdraw the Cairo employés from Khartoum without its falling into the hands of Mahdi's emissaries, and if this took place, then of course all hope of saving the Cairo employés of Kassala and Senaar and the garrisons of Equator and Bahr-Gazelle fails, and Berber and Dongola must fall also, not by the force of Mahdi, but by sheer collapse. I am strongly against any permanent retention of the Soudan, but I think we ought to leave it with decency, and give the respectable people a man to lead them, around whom they

can rally, and we ought to support that man by money and by opening road to Berber.'

On the 8th of April he had telegraphed to Sir E. Baring: 'I do not see the fun of being caught here to walk about the streets for years as a dervish, with sandalled feet; not that (D.V.) I will ever be taken alive. It would be the climax of meanness after I had borrowed money from the people here, and called on them to sell their grain at a low price, etc., to go and abandon them without using every effort to relieve them, whether those efforts are diplomatically correct or not; and I feel sure, whatever you may feel diplomatically, I have your support—and that of every man professing himself a gentleman—in private.'

In reply to a telegram of Lord Granville announcing the resolution of the Government not to send any aid, Gordon sent a long telegram, beginning, 'Thanks for kind expressions,' and ending with this postscript:—

'P.S. July 31, 1884.—Reading over your telegram of May 5, 1884, you ask me "state cause and intention in staying at Khartoum, knowing Government means to abandon Soudan," and in answer I say, I stay at Khartoum because Arabs have shut us up, and will not let us out. I also add that even if the road was opened the people would not let me go unless I gave them some government, or took them with me, which I could not do. No one would leave more willingly than I would if it was possible.'

Differing in tone from these despatches is

another addressed to Sir E. Baring, the Khedive, and Nubar Pasha, and dated September 18, in which he says:—

'How many times have we written asking for reinforcements, calling your serious attention to the Soudan! No answer at all has come to us as to what has been decided in the matter, and the hearts of men have become weary of this delay. While you are eating, drinking, and resting on good beds, we and those with us, both soldiers and servants, are watching by night and day, endeavouring to quell the movement of this false Mahdi. . . . . It is therefore hoped that you will listen to all that is told you by Stewart and the Consuls, and look at it seriously, and send troops as we asked, without any delay.'

Lord Wolseley's Relief Expedition. — The siege of Khartoum had lasted five months before (on August 5) a vote of credit for the relief expedition was asked for; and not until the 14th was the Nile route decided upon. On the 28th it was announced that Lord Wolseley had been selected to command the expedition. Three days before this, on August 25, Gordon had made a successful attack on the chief Arab camp, killing the commander-in-chief of the investing army, and clearing the immediate vicinity of the city He knew, however, that this was only a respite, for the number of the Mahdi's followers was now countless; in fact, the whole country outside the walls was lost to the cause of order ever since

it was proclaimed that the Soudan was to be evacuated as quickly as possible.

At what time the tidings first reached Khartoum of the British expedition of relief is not clear; but Gordon had already sent away Stewart and Power and the French Consul, while the river allowed of their departure. Before they left, Gordon heard of the battles of Tamai and El Teb, and knew that the road from Suakin to Berber was open for British and Indian troops. It was then expected that Sir Gerald Graham would hasten to Khartoum, but the authorities at home negatived the proposal. Gordon then prepared for the worst. He knew that the greatest peril would be in the late autumn and winter, when the crops in the south were gathered in, and the tribes would be more free to join the Mahdi.

End of the Siege.—About the beginning of November, Mohammed Achmet arrived from Obeid, with a force estimated at from 25,000 to 30,000 men, most of them well armed with rifles, and the Krupp guns which had been taken from the conquered garrisons and from Hicks' troops.

Stewart had by this time been killed on his way down from Berber to Dongola. Gordon was all alone. The old men and women who had friends in the neighbouring villages left the town. The uninhabited part was destroyed; the remainder was enclosed by a wall. In the centre of Khartoum he had built himself a tower, from the roof of which he kept a sharp look-out with

his field-glass in the daytime. At night he went the rounds of the fortifications, cheering his men and keeping them on the alert against attacks. Treachery was always his greatest dread. Many of the townsfolk sympathised with the Mahdi; he could not depend on all his troops, and he could only rely on one of his pashas, Mehemet Ali. He rejoiced in the news of the approach of the British relieving force. He illuminated Khartoum and fired salutes in honour of the news, and he doubled his exertions to fill his granaries with grain. On November 21 his steamers brought in thirty boat-loads of grain from the Blue Nile, the price falling at once to thirty shillings per ardeb.

The last detailed message arrived from Gordon November 13. It was dated November 4, and was addressed to Lord Wolseley. It gave many directions as to what should be done, and repudiated most emphatically the idea that the expedition was coming to rescue him. 'You are coming,' he wrote, 'not to relieve me, but to rescue the garrisons which I was unable to withdraw.' He had previously received a message from Wolseley, of October 14, so that at this time Khartoum and Dongola were within ten or fifteen days of each other. A subsequent message, received on December 8, gave further news of his operations. Gordon was then making powder, repairing disabled steamers, and actually building two new ones. His admiral, Kasham Amors, with five steamers and 500 men, had driven the rebels from the banks of the Nile as far as

Shendy, and had brought in large supplies of grain. The Nile from Senaar to Shendy was patrolled by his steamers, and, although the Mahdi had 15,000 troops on the west bank of the river, all was going on well inside Khartoum, with one exception.

On December 14 a letter was received by Sir Gerald Graham in Cairo from General Gordon, saying: 'Farewell. You will never hear from me again. I fear there will be treachery in the garrison, and all will be over by Christmas.' It was this melancholy warning that led Lord Wolseley to order the dash across the desert. Of the origin of his foreboding nothing is known.

The latest despatch published in the Blue-books is of the same date, December 14:

'General Gordon to the Chief of the Staff,
Soudan Expeditionary Force.

'Sir,—I send down the steamer Berdeer to-morrow, with vol. vi. of my private journal, containing account of the events in Khartoum from November 5 to December 14. The state of affairs is such that one cannot foresee further than five to seven days, after which the town may at any time fall. I have done all in my power to hold out, but I own I consider the position is extremely critical, almost desperate; and I say this without any feeling of bitterness with respect to Her Majesty's Government, but merely as a matter of fact. Should the town fall, it will be questionable whether it will be worth the while of Her Majesty's Government to continue its expedition; for it is certain that the

fall of Khartoum will insure that of Kassala and Senaar.—I have, &c. (Signed), C. G. GORDON.'

The Mahdi, who had been forced to withdraw by the vigorous fire from Gordon's steamers, had returned to Omdurman, where he had concentrated his troops. From thence he sent 14,000 men to Berber, to recruit the forces of Osman Digna, and it was these men probably that fought at Abu Klea.

After this nothing was heard beyond the rumour that Omdurman was captured, and two brief messages from Gordon. The first, which arrived January 1, was as follows:—'Khartoum all right.—C. E. Gordon, December 14, 1884.' The second was brought by the steamers which met General Stewart at Metammeh on January 21.

The following are the dates of the chief movements for the relief of Khartoum:—

September 10.—Lord Wolseley arrives at Cairo.

September 12.—News that Gordon had attacked Berber; also report that he had been actively engaged on the river south of Khartoum, and that he had captured two islands from the rebels.

September 17.—Despatch received from Gordon at Khartoum, dated August 26, in which he says:—'I am awaiting arrival of British troops in order to evacuate garrison. Send me Zebehr. If the rebels kill the Egyptians, you will be answerable for their blood.'

October 4.—Lord Wolseley arrives at Wady Halfa.

October 6.—Wreck and massacre of Colonel Stewart and party near Berber.

October 17.—Bombardment of Shendy and Metammeh by Gordon, with three steamers and eighteen nuggars.

November 2.—At Dongola. 1st Battalion South Staffordshire embark on 5th. Practically commencement of advance.

November 8.—Letter received from General Gordon, confirming report of Colonel Stewart's death, and saying he has sufficient provisions to hold out till expedition arrives.

December 16.—Lord Wolseley arrives at Korti.

December 30.—Departure of General Stewart for Metammeh.

January 1.—Message from Gordon: 'Khartoum all right, December 14.—C. G. Gordon.'

January 2.—First portion of Stewart's force arrived at Gakdul.

January 17.—Attacks the Mahdi's forces at Abu Klea Wells, gaining a victory.

January 18.—Reported capture of Omdurman by the Mahdi.

January 19.—General Stewart again attacked by the Mahdi's forces at Gubat, when enemy were once more defeated. General Stewart wounded fatally.

January 21.—Reconnaissance in force of Metammeh, assisted by four steamers sent down by General Gordon, with message dated December 29, 'Khartoum all right; could hold out for years.'

January 24.—Sir C. Wilson left for Khartoum

with two steamers and a detachment of Sussex Regiment.

January 28.—Arrived at Khartoum, to find the city in the hands of the rebels. On the 26th the traitor Faraz Pasha had opened the gates to the enemy, and Gordon was slain that day.

Gordon's Character and Inner Life.—In order to give as connected a view as possible of the main incidents of Gordon's career, I have omitted in their chronological order, many anecdotes illustrating his personal character, and especially his inner life. A selection of such anecdotes will enhance the feeling of admiration with which his life is regarded. History presents many records of exploits more imposing, and of events having larger influence on public affairs. But there is no life in ancient or modern times more remarkable in its own sphere, more abounding in lessons of Christian faith and charity, as well as of honour, courage, and every manly virtue, and therefore more worthy of being presented as a model and example.

Few can possess gifts so rare, or be placed in positions so difficult and responsible; but all may strive to follow in the same path of piety and self-denial, of devotion to duty, and of busy beneficence—the result of spiritual communion with God, and love of the Master's service.

His example is more useful, as he had his full share of the faults of humanity. Mr. Stannard, in his personal recollections, says of him, 'A very

real and human man he was—as great, as good, and as true as any have described him; not a colourless saint without a flaw or fault to retrieve his goodness from monotony—as some would apparently have us conceive him—but a man whose genius was too brilliant, and whose parts were too strong to be without corresponding weaknesses, and prejudices almost as marked as his talents. If I describe his peculiarities as well as his goodness, it will not be to detract from his reputation, but rather to enhance it; for who could have loved Gordon as we did if he had been nothing more than a model of all the virtues?

Reverence for God's Word.—The foundation of all Gordon's religious character was his belief in the Bible as the revelation of the mind and will of God. 'It is written' was to him the beginning of all truth, and the end of all controversy. 'These are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His name.' While earnest and diligent in searching the Scriptures, he knew that the Spirit of God alone, in answer to prayer, can be the Teacher of the truths outwardly revealed. Hence his seasons of daily reading and meditating on God's Word, and his constant joining, whether in his own devotions or in his teaching and visiting, of reading the Scriptures with prayer for the light and life of the Divine Spirit. It was so in his early happy days at Gravesend; and Mr. Pearson, of the

Nyanza Mission, telling lately of his visit to Khartoum in 1878, says, 'After the work of the day was finished, Gordon would say, "Let us have reading and prayer;" and in that very palace which was, perhaps, the scene of his death, we used to meet and pray, not separating sometimes until one in the morning.'

Of Neglect of the Bible.—In his *Reflections in Palestine* he speaks of the study of the Bible as not being so general or so careful as it ought to be. Few indeed could say, in the words of Job, 'I have esteemed the words of His mouth more than my necessary food' (Job xxiii. 12); or like Jeremiah, 'Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and Thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart' (Jer. xv. 16). Gordon says, 'Bibles abound in our land; but are they read and studied as they ought to be, considering who is the writer? It is said both in the Old and the New Testament, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matt. iv. 4; Deut viii. 3). How few forget to take their daily meals! Yet we starve our souls, though they require their portion, which is the Word of God.'

Key to the Scriptures.—As he grew in the knowledge of the truth and in assurance of faith, he dwelt more and more on the spiritual indwelling of God. This he spoke of as 'the key of the Scriptures.' 'Boldly and humbly,' he wrote, 'study the Scriptures. God's indwelling in us is

the key of the Scriptures; they are a sealed book as long as you do not realise this truth, which is sure and certain, whether you feel it or not. I would that all knew more of the peace of God, more of the direct work He has in the world and in our troubles; to know more of His personality and His union in us.' A favourite verse with him was 1 John iv. 15, 'Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.'

Practical Religion.—With all his devout and, in his later years, somewhat mystical meditations, there never was a day in which Gordon was not energetic and unwearying in practical benevolence. Whatever were his opinions, his practice was according to the words of the apostle, 'Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.'

To some of Gordon's ways of Christian work and charity at Gravesend we have already alluded. Numbers of stories have been brought up concerning that time.

Many of his 'boys' are now grown-up men, holding responsible positions in the town; but they never cease to express their gratitude to 'the Colonel.' One of them, when a lad, exhibited consumptive tendencies. Gordon at once despatched him to Margate at his own expense, with the result that he entirely recovered his

health. The man, in token of gratitude, has christened his eldest son 'Gordon,' after the soldier who, he says, 'saved both his body and his soul. In another case, Gordon handed over a dirty little urchin to one of his lady friends, with the remark, 'I want to make you a present of a boy.' Under good influences the lad grew up until he became a respectable member of society. Years after, when he was earning good wages at sea, and was about to be married, he fell from the topmast of his vessel, and was conveyed to the Gravesend Infirmary with a fractured skull. In his last moments, however, he did not forget his benefactor, and in trembling tones, asked his adopted mother to 'Say to the Colonel, "Jesus, Lover of my soul."' Even after he had lost sight of his lads for years Gordon never forgot them, and was ever ready to do them a kindness if it lay in his power. One instance may be quoted. Among his 'princes' was a boy known as 'Little Albert,' who, through Gordon's kindness, was apprenticed to a tradesman of Gravesend. Subsequently the lad went into a business house at Southampton, where he was placed in a department which he did not understand. Fearing that his services would be dispensed with, he communicated with his friends, and they, in turn, wrote to General Gordon, who happened to be staying in Southampton at his sister's house. Without loss of time the General called on 'Little Albert,' whom he scarcely recognised in the youth of 6 feet 2 inches who presented himself, and had a consultation with his employer.

The result was that the young man was retained in his situation, and placed in a department with which he was well acquainted. The incident is a trifling one, but it shows his inexhaustible kindness of heart.

In the *Ragged School Magazine* for April, 1885 Mr. Guest tells the following incident:—A poor Gravesend youth, in London as clerk to a solicitor became paralysed. Gordon heard of it when abroad on service. The very day he returned, his first work was to find out the paralysed clerk. Finding him in miserable lodgings, Gordon thought he would be more comfortable and better attended to in a suburban institution, to which he took him for admission. As they drove up to the large building, the countenance of the man fell. 'Why, what's the matter? What is it?' said Gordon. The reply came, 'I have a feeling that if I go in there I shall not come out till I am carried out.' Without a moment's delay, Gordon said, 'Then you shall not go there,' and the driver was told to turn back. Gordon found lodgings for him near the house of Mr. Guest, at Milton, near Gravesend, who knew the lad, and tells the anecdote. Multitudes of similar instances of thoughtful kindness could be told, as well as of his liberal gifts and allowances, some of the latter paid regularly to his last days.

But this beneficence was only one form of his practical piety. He considered that Christianity must first make a man better in the ordinary work and duties of life and of his calling. Hence his diligence and energy in all his professional pursuits;

hence his justice, firmness, clemency, watchfulness as a ruler and administrator. He was everywhere and in all things the Christian.

Dislike of War.—Mr. Gladstone, in one of his earlier speeches as to the employment of Gordon in the Soudan, after speaking of him as 'a hero, and a Christian hero,' said, 'It is no exaggeration to add that, in his dealings with Oriental people, he is also a genius; that he has a faculty, an influence, a command, brought about by moral means, for no man in this House hates the unnecessary resort to blood more than General Gordon.' How true this was, we may see from Gordon's own words concerning war: 'People have little idea how far from "glorious" war is. It is organised murder, pillage, and cruelty, and it is seldom that the weight falls on the fighting men—it is on the women, children, and old people. Consider it how we may, war is a brutal, cruel affair.'

Tenderness of Heart.—Speaking of some of his men killed and wounded in a skirmish, he says, 'I wish people could see what the suffering of human creatures is—I mean those who wish for war. I am a fool, I daresay, but I cannot see the sufferings of any of these people without tears in my eyes.'

The sight of the misery of the slaves always deeply moved him. 'It is a sad sight to see the poor starved creatures looking so wistfully at one. What can I do? Poor souls, I cannot feed or look after them. I must leave it to God, who will

arrange all in kindness. Some of them were so miserably thin. I have sent them some dhoora. I declare solemnly that I would give my life willingly to save the sufferings of these people; and if I would do this, how much more does He care for them than such imperfection as I am! You would have felt sick had you seen them. Poor creatures, thirty-six hours without food!'

Of this tenderness of feeling, which extended to dumb animals as well as to his fellow-men of every class, an interesting anecdote is told by a lady still living:—'A few years since, my husband and I were living in South Kensington, and General Gordon was a frequent visitor at our house. I had a bullfinch which had been injured, and was apparently in great pain. General Gordon was much distressed at the poor bird's sufferings, and did his utmost for several days to aid me in giving it relief. Our efforts were unavailing, as the bird died. A day or two afterwards I met General Gordon coming towards my house with a large parcel in his hand, containing a cage and another bullfinch, which he had been kind and thoughtful enough to get for me, and which was his remedy for reconciling me to the loss of my former bird. I never can forget his tenderness towards all dumb creatures. He told me that whilst riding in the Soudan he had one day switched his whip at a lizard, and damaged its tail, and that his regret for the involuntary injury thus inflicted by him haunted him for days.'

Extreme Tolerance and Charity in Judging others.—While Gordon was very clear and distinct in his own personal principles as a Christian and Protestant, he felt towards others a tolerance which some might consider extreme. Referring, in one of his letters, to the late Dr. Christopher Wordsworth, Bishop of Lincoln, Gordon says: 'He is imbued with the indwelling of God; only one fault—he is hard on the Roman Catholics.'

Yet with this kindliness he was well aware of the tendency of Romanism to debase the mind. Speaking of Abyssinia, he said: 'The ignorant priests rule the country. The excommunication of the priests is the great weapon; it is terrible, far worse than, or quite as bad as, the Inquisition. It amuses me to hear the Catholic priests here complain of it, and say that the priests want to keep the people ignorant, so as to rule them. Is it not what *they* would do elsewhere, if they could?'

On many occasions he spoke with tolerance of the devoutness and sincerity of the Mussulmans, who 'never were ashamed of their religion, and who often acted up to the light they had, more honestly and faithfully than many nominal Christians do to their faith.' But he knew well the errors and defects of the religion of Mahomet, which has nothing of real spiritual life. Speaking of the indwelling of the Spirit of God in the human soul, he says, 'The Mohammedans have nothing in their religion which in the least answers to this great truth.'

Even with regard to the superstitions of heathen worshippers he spoke with respect, in the same spirit that St. Paul spoke of the reverence of the Greeks for 'the unknown God,' whom they ignorantly worshipped. So, among the heathen, everywhere and in all times, there were some who might be seeking the Lord, 'if haply they might feel after Him and find Him.'

This explains a curious passage in one of Gordon's letters, where he refers to incantations made against him by some magicians among unruly African tribes whom he went to chastise: 'Somehow, from the earnestness that they made their incantations with, I had some thought of misgiving on account of them! It was odd that a repulse was soon to follow. These incantations were earnest prayers for celestial aid, in which the pray-er knew he would need the help of some unknown Power to avert danger. *That the native knows not the true God is true, but God knows him*, and moved him to pray, and answered his prayer.'

Support of Missionary Work.—One might anticipate from this readiness to see good in everything, and to find elements of true religion under false systems, that Gordon would not be zealously affected toward Christian mission work. There could not be a greater mistake. 'How refreshing it is to hear of the missionary efforts made in these countries!' Thus he wrote in his

journal at some far remote station in Equatorial Africa. His correspondence with the Church Missionary Society proves how warm was the interest he took in the attempt to carry Christianity to the heathen. But he had very high views of the objects to be sought, and of the spirit required in the agents. To a party of missionaries on their way to the interior of Africa he sent a letter, in which he says:—

'I want you to like my people, not to look on them as utterly evil. Mr. Wright has, I daresay, told you my views about missionaries. They must hate father, mother, and their own life also. You are sure to succeed if you will entirely trust Him. Shut your eyes to Stanley, to Egyptian Government, to all things, and nothing will go wrong, and you must succeed though it may not be as you would think the best way. You have counted the cost and embarked in this work for His sake, and, though inferior far, for our nation's sake. You must go through with it. Are you missionaries? So am I. The letter must be one which he who runs can read—the *life*.'

'Do not send Lukewarms!'—In the same spirit he writes to the Secretary of the Church Missionary Society, Mr. Wright, from Cairo, March 30, 1878. He offers to be of every service within his power. 'I will engage to send up safe any persons you may wish to send; to secure you free passage for letters, etc., and to do this free of cost within my government. . . . At Dubaga

(Mtesa's capital) is an officer of mine, a German, who has written orders to see after your people, as also have all my officers *en route*; they are ordered to do all they can for your people free of cost. Emim Effendi, my *ambassador!* is now at Dubaga; and will look after your people. Do not send "*lukewarms*."'

The Object of African Missions.—Gordon was very outspoken in his comments and criticisms on what he considered wrong in the spirit in which missionary work was entered on. He had been asked as to the likelihood of King Mtesa's protection and influence being useful. The report of Mr. Stanley about this sable potentate had raised rather higher expectations than Gordon thought justifiable, from what he knew of the man and of the country. He said, in one of his letters, with some sarcasm, 'You see that a missionary likes to deal with Cæsars, and not with the herd of common mortals. Now there is little doubt in my mind that if a man would sacrifice himself to a particular tribe he would find that tribe would not molest him, and would treat him kindly. There is also no doubt but that he would find the life dull to a degree—that death would be preferable to it; but I believe he would have his reward. The people are quite quiet and inoffensive, and a man of some intellect would soon gain an immense influence over them. Who will do this inglorious work, and live and die unknown? The glory of Mtesa's conversion would lead to other things, and, there-

fore, I believe men could be got to go there; but these tribes, and this slow, dull life, would need a self-denial and abnegation of self which would be difficult to find. "When He cometh, will He find faith on the earth?" With all our profession, I think not much.'

Admiration of Livingstone.—He spoke highly of Livingstone's ideas and work as a Christian missionary, for whom, indeed, in every respect, he had the utmost admiration and affection. He even mentions with sympathy Livingstone's preference to being alone in his journeys, from the difficulty of having anyone like-minded, and to whom he himself might be burdensome.

Casting all Care on God.—On first assuming the governorship of the Soudan, he wrote:—'No man ever had a harder task than I, unaided, have before me: but it sits as a feather on me. As Solomon asked, I ask wisdom to govern this great people; and not only will He give it, but all else besides. And why? Because I value not the "all besides." . . . I do what I think is pleasing to my God; and as far as man goes, I need fear nothing from any one. . . . What I have to do is to settle matters that I do not cause a revolution on my own death—not that I value life. I have done with my comforts in coming here. My work is great, but does not weigh me down. I go on as straight as I can. I feel my own weak-

ness, and look to Him who is almighty, and I leave the issue, without inordinate care, to Him.

'I have an enormous province to look after; but it is a great blessing to me to know that God has undertaken the administration of it, and it is His work, not mine. If I fail, it is His will; if I succeed, it is His work. Certainly He has given me the joy of not regarding the honours of this world, and to value my union with Him above all things. May I be humbled to the dust and fail, so that He may glorify Himself. The greatness of my position only depresses me, and I cannot help wishing that the time had come when He will lay me aside and use some other one to do His work. . . . But I do thank God for using me as His instrument, and look forward to my rest.'

No Fear of Death.—In his later years, Gordon had no fear of death, because he believed all things are appointed by Divine wisdom and love. This trustful belief in the omniscience of God and in His over-ruling providence outwardly resembled the fatalism of the Moslem creed, but in reality was a very different and far nobler faith. In him there was no stolid, passive acceptance of whatever happened, but a manful, resolute activity in good deeds; while the event was left, in humble submission, to the Divine will. This religious faith was the more pronounced in being united to a naturally cool and courageous spirit. One of the earliest of his 'narrow escapes' was in the Crimea, when a Russian bullet passed within an inch of

his head, and when Gordon's only comment on the occasion was: 'They'—the Russians—'are very good marksmen; their bullet is large and pointed!' This coolness in danger was at first due to constitutional strength of nerve, but it became intensified by the rational faith and devout spirit of his later years. It was the more conspicuous from the enfeebled health and depressing anxieties amidst which he displayed more than the firmness and fearlessness of his natural character.

How to get Assurance of Faith.—In a leaflet written many years ago, and printed in English and French, Gordon spoke of faith almost in the tone in which good old Cæsar Malan used to insist on the possession of 'assurance,' even by those who timidly refrained from professing to have its comfort. 'You believe in your heart,' says Gordon, 'that Jesus is the Son of God? Then God dwells in your body; and if you ask Him, "O Lord, I believe that Jesus is the Son of God; show me, for His sake, that Thou livest in me," He will make you feel His presence in your heart. Many believe sincerely that Jesus is the Son of God, but are not happy, because they do not believe *that* which God tells them: that He lives in them, both in body and soul, if they confess Jesus to be His Son. You believe this statement, yet do not feel God's presence? Ask Him to show Himself to you, and He *will* surely do so.'

Pharisees and Publicans.—Gordon had, in

mature years, a great aversion to doctrinal formularies in religion. He did not object to creeds and articles in their place, but he dreaded the belief of them being substituted for faith in the living God, and communion with Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit. Speaking of the doctrines of free grace and of the Christian life, he said: 'I believe when we begin life we are far more capable of accepting those truths than afterwards; when we have imbibed man's doctrines, we must unlearn, and then learn again. With a child he has only to learn. Therefore it is easier for a Publican to accept the truths than a Pharisee. The Pharisee builds his house, and uses men's doctrines; after a time he sees difficulties, and tries to dovetail his new views into his house. They will not fit in; but he says, "Why, I cannot pull down all my work and begin again," so he forces them in; and still they will not fit. Then he takes down a little, and then a little more; but it is no good; he finds the foundation is at fault, and thence great trials and troubles, till at last he has to pull all down; and when he has done that—why, the miracle of a new house on the true foundation appears before him, in which work he has not to make an effort. The Publican has built nothing; feels he can build nothing, but that all is done for him. Why one should be a Pharisee and have all this toil, and the other should be a Publican and have none, is God's mystery of His government. It is pain and grief to pull down a life's work, and to grub up even the foundations; but while you pull down each

stone, your true house is built up by God, so that while you are pulling down you are in reality having a house built.'

There is a truth in this; but it is not true that the knowledge of Scriptural doctrines or theology must be discarded in order to acquire spiritual life, nor is this what Gordon really meant. In his own instruction of others he was very diligent in teaching the truths and doctrines of the Bible, while earnest in prayer for the living power of the Spirit of truth.

Informal Theology.—He was not a theologian in the conventional sense of the term; but he never depreciated theological systems, or theological treatises, in their own place and for their appointed use. Bishop Pearson on the Creed, and Bishop Harold Browne on the Thirty-nine Articles, were favourite books with him, and he warmly expressed his sense of the usefulness of the latter work in his own study of the Bible. But he valued all uninspired books only as helps to the study of the one Book—the Word of God—which was his sole rule of faith and of practice.

Prayer.—In his *Reflections in Palestine*, General Gordon has the following remarks on prayer:—'This word has comforted me: "Do not abhor us, for Thy name's sake, do not disgrace the throne of Thy glory: remember, break not Thy covenant with us" (Jeremiah xiv. 21). My comfort in this passage is based (1) on the words, that if we

believe in Jesus, He dwells in us, and we are His members—members of His body; and based (2) on the fact that if a promise is made, I have a right not only to believe the promise, but I am dishonouring the Promiser if I do not. We have the right—indeed it is our duty—to pray with this claim. I pray thus: "Art Thou forgetful of what Thine enemies have made Thee suffer, of Thy victory over them, that Thou allowest the members of Thy body to fall under the power of Thine enemies, and thus to triumph over Thee in Thy members? Wilt Thou disgrace the throne of Thy glory? Wilt Thou forget Thy covenant with us into which Thou hast entered? For Thou, O Lord, knowest all concerning Thy members."

'This is my prayer—the prayer that the simplest of us can make:

'O Lord, who dost live in all who believe that Jesus is Thy Son, make us feel Thy presence more and more, and grant that the Holy Ghost may produce, by His indwelling in us, more of the fruit of our union with our Lord and Saviour, to Thy honour and glory. Amen.'

Inshallah (D.V.)—In a letter about one of his tropical journeys, Gordon says: 'The heat is terrible; however (D.V.), one and a half day's march will complete the journey, and then I turn northwards. You have no idea how *Inshallah* (God willing) grows on one here. Things generally go so crooked, to *our* frail judgment, that I would defy a man to express himself as in Europe: "I

shall go to town to-morrow, and be back on Tuesday." He would never say that in these countries without the preface; and if he did, the hearer would say it for him.'

Letting Light into the Soudan.—General Gordon wrote many evil reports of the Soudan; but it was more the moral than physical aspects of the region that depressed and pained him. Chiefly through the horrors of the slave trade had it been made a region of disorder and despair. Seven-eighths of the population were slaves, while the slave-dealers kept the whole country in terror, and prevented peaceful progress, although the land was capable of great agricultural and commercial development. In 1882 he thus wrote in regard to railway communication with the coast, *viâ* Berber and Suakin:—

'Speaking from a long experience in the Soudan, I feel convinced that until such a communication is made no real progress can be reckoned upon in those countries. Their being so near Egypt Proper, and yet so backward as they are, is simply owing to the great difficulty existing in getting to and from them to the Red Sea. A belt of arid sand of 280 miles separates them from civilisation, and till this is spanned no real progress can be made. There can be not the least doubt but that the route Suakin to Berber is the true natural route to be opened. Had this route been opened when I was in the Soudan, it would have been infinitely more simple to have governed those countries.

The hidden misery of peoples in the dark places of the Soudan exists because no light is thrown on those lands, which light this railway would give; and it is certain, when it is known that the railway is completed, an entire change will take place in the whole of this country. As long as the present state of affairs (with no communication) exists there will be revolts and misery, and this will entail the expenditure of many thousands per annum. I conclude by saying that the railway is a *sine quâ non* for the well-being of the Soudan.'

Gordon's Personal Appearance—There are various pictures and photographs which have made Gordon's portrait familiar, as he was in the latter part of his career. Our frontispiece is from a photograph taken in 1883. He long retained the almost boyish look of his early years in the Crimea and in China. As age advanced, and under pressure of cares and toils, his face became lined, and his brown hair shaded with grey; but the sweet expression remained, and the clear blue eyes were as bright and piercing as ever.

A First Interview with Gordon.—Mr. Pearson, one of the Church Missionary Society's agents, on his way to the Uganda station, thus described his first interview with Gordon at Khartoum, in 1878:—'On going to the palace, at two o'clock, of course the guard turned out, and several kavasses ushered us upstairs, and in a large corridor we saw a table laid for lunch, and a little

man in his shirt-sleeves walking about. I took him for the butler. On looking through the open doors opposite I saw a very splendid divan, with a round table in the middle, on which was a bunch of flowers; several looking-glasses on the walls. But on catching sight of us, the "butler" rushed up, and said, "How d'ye do? So glad to see you! Excuse shirt-sleeves—so hot! Awful long voyage you've had. I'll make a row about it. Are you very angry with me?" A hearty grasp of the hand to each, a piercing glance of small sharp eyes accompanied this flow of words, spoken in a clear, sharp, but pleasant tone of voice.

'Yes, it is he indeed; the liberator of the slaves, the ruler of a country half as big again as France, —the Chinese Gordon!'

'It is hard to describe him; he is short, thin; with well-moulded face, slightly grey hair; his eyes calm, but at times lighted up with great fire and energy; thin nervous hands; and a peculiar smile. We have had some glorious talks with him, which have strengthened me. I only wish I could stay longer with him.'

It was at this interview that Mr. Pearson happened to mention his having written to his mother. 'That is right,' said Gordon, 'always let your mother know where and how you are. How my mother loved me!'

Modesty as to his own Deeds.—Mr. Wilson, the historian of Gordon's Chinese campaigns, in his record of the 'Ever Victorious Army,' thus gives

in brief his estimate of the hero of the narrative :—'A great deal of what has been mentioned to his credit I should never have learned from himself; and the reader who has gone through the details of fighting and bloodshed with which his name is associated might be surprised, on finding him to be a man still young, of quiet manners and disposition, and of varied culture. Deeply religious in sentiment, and a soldier of the Havelock and Stonewall Jackson type, Colonel Gordon presents few of the characteristics usually associated with the dashing leader of an irregular force. Great pleasure in activity, a self-sacrificing disposition, and a sense of duty, have been evidently the mainsprings of his conduct.'

At Gravesend, when he visited the poor or aged, he would often cheer them by telling stories of his own adventures in China and other foreign lands—subjects on which he never uttered a word to those in his own station of life.

If he loathed one thing more than another, it was complimentary speeches in his honour, or anything in the shape of fuss or ceremony. Nor did he like formal partings from his friends and co-workers. When on the point of leaving Gravesend, he was presented with a pocket Bible at Miss Broome's Mission Room at Passenger Court, in which he took great interest. He was so affected, however, that he could not sit out the proceedings. 'I must get out of this,' he exclaimed, and, handing a couple of sovereigns to one of his friends, with the request that she would provide

the poor people with a tea, he left the building in haste, with moistened eyes.

In the Gallery.—When he went to Gravesend, he used to take his place in the gallery of the parish church among the poor. Nobody in the town knew anything about his history, and he was allowed to keep to this place in the gallery, until by-and-by it began to leak out that he was no other than the leader of the 'Ever Victorious Army' in China. Then the churchwardens approached the stranger, and graciously asked him to come down and occupy a place in the luxurious seats in the area appointed for the grandees. Gordon thanked them, but declined, preferring to keep the seat in which he had so long sat unnoticed and unknown.

Frugality and Generosity.—In everything pertaining to his own person or his own pleasure Gordon was almost ascetic in his self-denial. He had no taste for things he considered of little moment, provided he kept his health for work and his resources for helping others. His disinterested conduct in China was the wonder of all who witnessed it. But it was the habit of his whole life. He was lavish in giving, sometimes even beyond his present means. At Gravesend his pay was always laid out for others, and his pocket was often empty. It was on one of these occasions he heard of Canon Miller's appeal for a Hospital Sunday collection. The idea struck

him as excellent; but at the moment he had nothing to give. He took the Chinese gold medal which he had received from the Empress, effaced the inscription, and sent it anonymously to Canon Miller, who got ten guineas for it. Only by accident long after was the donor known. A thousand anecdotes could be told of his generous kindness, often at no little inconvenience to himself.

Not much Outfit Needed.—On the eve of Gordon's departure on his last journey, a friend is related to have said to him, 'Have you got your kit ready, General?' 'I have got what I always have. This hat is good enough, and so are these clothes. I shall start as I am; my boots are quite strong.' And how are you off for cash, etc.? You must have some ready money.' 'Ah, I forgot that. I had to borrow five-and-twenty pounds from the King of the Belgians to get over here. Of course I must pay this, and I shall want a little more. A hundred pounds apiece for myself and Stewart will be enough. What on earth do we want more for?'

Favourite Books.—Although the Bible was the one book for Gordon, it could not be said even of this that he was *homo unius libri*. In his letters are many references to varied studies. His admiration had been great in early life for some of the classics, a taste which he never wholly lost; but the care and health of the soul became gradually the main object with him, and in this he also found the best preparation for his active life.

At various times he had special favourites. The *Imitation of Christ* was long his constant companion. Mr. Wilson, Presbyterian minister at Gravesend, says that at that time he thought highly of Hill's *Deep Things of God*, and of Hall's *Christ Mystical*, his copies of which he left as parting gifts to Mr. Wilson. Watson on *Contentment* was afterwards a special favourite. 'It is the true exposition,' he wrote, 'of how happiness is to be obtained, *i.e.*, by submission to the will of God, whatever that will may be. He who can say he realises this, has overcome the world and its trials. Everything that happens to-day, good or evil, is settled and fixed, and it is no use fretting over it. The quiet peaceful life of our Lord was solely due to His submission to God's will.'

Other larger works have been already mentioned in connection with his views on theology. At the time of his leaving for Khartoum he had special delight in Clark's *Scripture Promises*, a copy of which book he is said to have given to several of our public men—who no doubt thought him a strange enthusiast.

In Female Society.—Remarks have been made about Gordon's aversion to female society. This means merely that he was never what is commonly called 'a ladies' man.' As the friend of his later years, Mr. Prebendary Barnes, has it, 'the faults furthest removed from Gordon's character were those which the French express by the words *petit maître*.' The small talk and trifling levity of

ordinary company he had no patience with. Hence he only looked with amusement or pity on the average world of womanhood—the world that lives to dress and dance and spend a butterfly existence. But in the society of sensible, cultured, Christian women, no man could be more agreeable and sympathetic. When he found ladies willing to work with him in his schemes of charity and beneficence, he had none of the shyness or reserve with which he had been credited. In those homes which he favoured with his presence he was always bright and genial. Where there was trouble or sickness or trial of any sort, his tender feeling and cheering spirit made him ever welcome. To women of the humblest grade, whether in England or among the poor Africans, he showed the most considerate and chivalrous kindness. What has been said, therefore, as to his aversion to mix himself much in social life refers only to his dislike of the routine of conventional 'society.' Occupied with great thoughts and good deeds he was too busy to be bothered with what many make the chief end of life. 'With children,' says Mr. Barnes, 'he was quite at home, and they instinctively felt that in him they had a friend who understood them, and whom they could trust and love.' Very touching and characteristic are the proofs of this in the letters written to Mr. Barnes during his last journey to Khartoum. 'I saw two pleasant things at Cairo—Baring's and Wood's chicks; and I heard one pleasant thing—Mrs. Amos wanted me to see her lambs. I hope you and Mrs. Barnes, Miss

Freeman, and all your children are well. My kindest love to them all.' And from Khartoum itself, on February 24, remembering it was the birthday of one of the girls, he wrote: 'An eventful day in 1870 for all your circle. I hope God will bless you all.' There never was a more affectionate and devoted son and brother, and none who knew his sensitive nature can understand the charge of want of tenderness towards the gentle sex, except in the sense of his being, like St. Paul, to whom he has been likened, so absorbed in the Master's work as to have no time for the frivolities of ordinary social life.

Worldly Amusements.—The same principle applies to the apparent aversion of Gordon to most of the ordinary routine of social life. In his letters and journals there are many emphatic and amusing remarks to this effect. For instance: 'I have not patience with the groans of half the world, and declare there is more happiness among these miserable blacks, who have not a meal from day to day, than among our own middle classes. The blacks are glad of a little handful of maize, and live in the greatest discomfort. They have not a strip to cover them; but you do not see them grunting and groaning all day long, as you see scores and scores in England, with their wretched dinner parties, and attempts at gaiety, where all is hollow and miserable.'

When he was describing, in playful anticipation, his plan for enjoying a rest at home, one of his

resolves was, 'I will accept no invitations to dinner parties.' And at Cairo, where he could not hide himself as at home, he writes, March 15, 1878—'I am much bothered, but I get to bed at 8 p.m., which is a comfort, for I do not dine out, and consequently do not drink wine. Every one laughs at me; but I do not care.'

Mr. Barnes says, 'Gordon was a man of strict, in some respects of austere, morality; but he never spoke in a cold or harsh tone about the lawful pleasures of the world. To such pleasures, however, he himself was absolutely indifferent. To him the only real joys seemed to be those of the spiritual life; and he had an eager desire for the time when he would possess them in their full splendour.'

What Mr. Barnes says about Gordon's *only* real joys is hardly consistent with what he adds—'The seriousness of Gordon's temper did not prevent him from being a bright and agreeable companion, especially when those with whom he talked could join him in smoking a cigarette. He had a keen sense of humour, and on every matter about which he cared to form an opinion he spoke clearly and decisively.' Mr. Barnes means that his highest joys were those of the spiritual life; but every one who knew Gordon can tell of the variety and brightness of his conversation, and of the real joy he took in scientific and literary matters, and still more in all natural objects of beauty and interest. Yet even in such things he gave up his own tastes and pleasures whenever

he could benefit or please others. For instance, he was passionately fond of flowers, and in his garden at Gravesend could indulge in the taste; but the flowers were all cultivated for sending to the poor and the sick, whose delight in them doubled his pleasure.

No Ascetic.—Sir Gerald Graham thus speaks of Gordon as a comrade:—'Pictures have been drawn of Gordon as a gloomy ascetic, wrapped up in mystic thoughts, retiring from all communion with the world, and inspiring fear rather than affection. I can only describe him as he appeared to me. Far from being a gloomy ascetic, he always seemed to me to retain a boyish frankness, and to long to share his ideas with others. Our intimacy began when we were thrown together in mining the docks of Sebastopol during the winter of 1855–56—a period Gordon always delighted in referring to whenever we met, by calling up old scenes, and even our old jokes of that time. Like all men of action, more especially soldiers, Gordon disliked argument with subordinates when once he had resolved on his course of action; otherwise he invited discussion, and I always found him most tolerant in listening to arguments against his own views, even on subjects in which he, of course, possessed a knowledge far exceeding any I could pretend to. To show the impression he made on me at the time of my last seeing him, in 1884, I will quote from a letter which I wrote shortly after:—"Charlie Gordon's character is a very fascinating

one; he has so much of the natural man about him. To his friends—and he treats all as friends whom he knows and trusts—his charm of manner is irresistible. It is utterly unlike the charm of a polished man of the world; it is the charm of a perfectly open mind, giving and demanding confidence, sometimes playfully, sometimes earnestly, and sometimes with touching humility."'

Sense of Humour.—There was a deep sense of humour in Gordon, and flashes of it often appear, even in his darkest times of anxiety and trouble. In giving an account of his sudden arrival at a remote outpost in the Soudan, having left his escort far behind, thanks to the swiftness of his camel, as well as to his own ardour, he says, writing to his sister, 'It is fearful to behold the Governor-General, arrayed in gold clothes, flying along like a madman, with only a guide, as if he was pursued!' He himself was amused at the absurdity of the situation.

At another southern outpost he had sent some troops to the black chief discovered by Speke, and introduced to the world by Stanley as 'King Mtesa.' Gordon knew poor Mtesa by report, and had formed no high opinion of him. He thought him very acute for a native, but crafty, and without any truth or principle. 'I am curious to know what happens with the mission, for Mtesa, *on principle*, keeps his visitors on short commons, expressly to make them humble themselves before him; and that, I expect, the mission will find irksome.'

In 1876, Gordon sent some of his men to see how things were going with Mtesa, and in the report of the visit he says, 'There was a German doctor up there with the troops, and Mtesa, sending out all his men but a few, took the Bible which Stanley gave him, and asked him to translate a passage in the Revelation about the dragon and the woman in childbirth. This had to go through three languages, and *one wonders what Mtesa heard at the end of it!* In spite of the change of his religion to Christianity, he wanted to keep my Mussulman priest; but I would not allow it.'

His keen eye saw an amusing illustration o . female vanity and love of ornament even in the most miserable slaves. 'Three black sluts were brought before me to be questioned as to the escaped slave-dealers. I saw one carefully undo the corner of a dirty bit of cloth she had on, and produce a necklace of a few paltry beads, which she put on, and then the poor creature looked quite happy.'

Of a slave whom he rescued, and afterwards took or sent to England, he says, 'He never smiles; he has gone through too much bitterness to feel any joy. I asked him to-day if he had got over his fatigues. He said, "No, no—I still feel the effects of my journey, and (patting his head) want of water." He is only stomach and head—one globe on the top of another.'

When Gordon was Governor-General of the Soudan he had some pet animals in the grounds of the Palace at Khartoum. In his descriptions

of them some touches of humour appear. He had two ostriches, which one day, without apparent provocation, rushed at a black slave in the garden, and striking him down with their feet nearly killed him. One of the strokes tore off the man's nose. Whether he had ever teased them we do not know; but Gordon's justice was executed on them in a humorous way. 'The culprits I have ordered to be sold into slavery, and to be annually plucked. The proceeds of their sale are to be devoted to purchasing the freedom of the wounded slave, and in giving him a good backsheesh. It will be a just retribution.'

Then he describes the amusing proceedings of a tame tortoise, whose movements puzzled some animals of higher intelligence. 'I have a gentleman and two lady sheep of extraordinary size. They are really enormous. They and the gazelles hate the tortoise. They settle down in a corner, and up he comes and turns them out. To them he is a moving stone, and they cannot make him out, moving on so slowly and surely.'

Some Narrow Escapes.—During his career Gordon's life was in frequent peril. The narrow escape from a Russian shell in the Crimea has been already mentioned. In his various campaigns and battles he was constantly under fire; but this is a danger expected by every brave leader of soldiers. Yet though always in the front, Gordon so often escaped injury that his army in China spoke of him as having 'a charmed life.' During the fourteen

months that he led that force, in innumerable encounters with the rebel Taipings, he was only once wounded, being shot through the leg in leading an assault on Kiutang. One of the men cried out that the commander was hit; but Gordon bade him be silent, and stood giving orders till he fainted from loss of blood, and was carried to the rear. The attack on this fortified place failed at the time, but Gordon was on the move again before his wound was properly healed, and while yet suffering from fever and weakness. The indomitable spirit of the man carried him through this as through many other troubles.

On one occasion Gordon was on the parapet of a many-arched bridge at a Chinese place called Patachiao, quietly meditating and smoking, when first one rifle or musket ball, and then a second, struck the stone on which he was sitting. These shots came, not from the enemy, but from his own camp, whence they had been fired unaccountably. On the second shot being fired, Gordon thought it necessary to descend into his boat and go over to the camp, in order to inquire into the matter; but he had hardly got half-way across the creek below, when that part of the bridge where he had been sitting suddenly fell into the water, so that the accidental shots which had endangered his life probably saved it!

He had another narrow escape from drowning when in the Soudan. He was passing a rope across the Upper Nile at Kerri, an operation of much difficulty. The rope caught on a rowlock of the

boat, and the sweep of the current bore down with such force that it was difficult to release it. One of the men was hammering the rowlock, while Gordon was lifting the rope. The rowlock slewed, and the rope, starting before he could let it go, dragged him into the river. Fortunately he rose, and catching the rudder was got out safely.

A day or two after, when the men were hauling taut the rope, which was attached to a tree, a whip snake, one of the most poisonous species, was shaken down. Gordon was lying under the tree, and the snake tried to obtain cover between his body and the ground. He had just time to get clear before it could fasten its fangs in him.

On the same expedition he was nearly poisoned by tasting a fruit, which a black said was harmless. During a thunderstorm, while putting the side of his wet tent straight at the moment of a flash of lightning, he received a couple of severe strokes, 'similar,' he says, 'to what a strong electric machine would give. What an escape!'

Other remarkable escapes he had, which are duly recorded as providential and to be mentioned with thankfulness; yet his whole life was one of strange deliverances, as the lives of most men are, if they only thought of the unseen dangers within and around them. As he wrote in one of his latest letters to his friend, Mr. Prebendary Barnes, 'In His hand He will hide me. You and I are equally exposed to the attacks of the enemy—*me not a bit more than you are.*'

Trust in God.—'Two passages,' Gordon wrote to a friend, from Khartoum, 'are helpful to me this day under my present difficulties—2 Chronicles xiv. 11 and xx. 6, 12.' Here are the words—'And Asa cried unto the Lord his God, and said, Lord, it is nothing with Thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power: help us, O Lord our God; for we rest on Thee, and in Thy name we go against this multitude. O Lord, Thou art our God; let not man prevail against Thee.'

The other verse is in the history of Jehoshaphat, who prayed thus: 'O Lord God of our fathers, art not Thou God in heaven? and rulest not Thou over all the kingdoms of the heathen? and in Thine hand is there not power and might, so that none is able to withstand Thee?' (verse 6). And then, in verse 12, 'O our God, wilt Thou not judge them? for we have no might against this great company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do: but our eyes are upon Thee.'

The date of the letter in which Gordon referred to these passages was March 6, 1884, when the hosts of the Mahdi were beginning to advance to Khartoum. A few days afterwards, Mr. Power, the *Times* correspondent, telegraphed to Cairo that Khartoum was 'quite blocked on the north, east, and west.'

If it is thought by any one that the tragical end of Gordon is inconsistent with his firm trust in God as his protector, it must be remembered that the promises are not absolute in regard to outward

deliverance. To Gordon, his own life or death was of little account, in his earnest and single-minded desire that the will of God should be done.

The Future Life.—Gordon expressed himself on this subject once as follows:—'The future world must be much more amusing, more enticing, more to be desired than this world—putting aside its absence of sorrow and sin. The future world has been somehow painted to our mind as a place of continuous praise, and, though we may not say it, one cannot help feeling that, if thus, it would prove monotonous. It cannot be thus. It must be a life of activity, for happiness is dependent on activity; death is cessation of movement; life is all movement.'

There is a mystery in the removal of a man like Gordon, in the midst of his days and when his country and the world might seem most to need him. But God has other spheres of work and service for those whose capacity has been shown and character tested in this life. When Father Staupitz was urging young Luther to preach and to appear in public, Luther said, 'It will be my death; I could not survive a quarter of a year.' To which the good old man replied, 'Well, in the name of God, should it be so, the Lord has great affairs to transact, and has use for good and wise people not in this world only.' In the parable of the Talents we have a glimpse of the future life as Gordon saw it: 'Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things,

I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.'

'Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him.'—There is a deep pathetic interest attaching to the following extract from one of the few letters from Khartoum that ever reached this country. Writing to his sister, on March 11, 1884, General Gordon said: 'Remember our Lord did not promise success or peace in this life. He promised tribulation, so if things do not go well after the flesh, He still is faithful. He will do all in love and mercy to me. My part is to submit to His will, however dark it may be.'

Last Words of General Gordon.—Major-General Cooke, R.E., an old friend and a comrade, sent to the *Times* the following communication. If not the latest written thought, the words quoted express the abiding tone of Gordon's mind in his last days of trial and in the face of certain death. They are contained in a letter written when the toils were closing round him: 'I am quite happy, and, like Lawrence, have tried to do my duty.'

The following message, addressed to a friend in Cairo, and dated Khartoum, December 14, was received only on February 24:—

'All is up. I expect a catastrophe in ten days' time. It would not have been so if our people had kept me better informed as to their intentions. My adieux to all.—C. G. GORDON.'

Whittier, the Quaker Poet.—One might expect that a soldier who had taken so prominent a part in wars would be regarded with doubtful admiration by a peace-loving Friend. Mr. J. G. Whittier, being asked to write a poem on General Gordon, sent this sympathetic reply:—

'Thy letter found me pondering the very subject to which it so kindly sought to call my attention. For years I have followed General Gordon's course with constantly increasing interest, wonder, and admiration, and I have felt his death as a great personal bereavement. A providential man, his mission in an unbelieving and selfish age revealed the mighty power of faith in God, self-abnegation, and the enthusiasm of humanity. For centuries no grander figure has crossed the disc of our planet. Unique, unapproachable in his marvellous individuality, he belongs to no sect or party, and defies classification or comparison. I should be sorry to see his name used for party purposes, for neither Conservative nor Radical has any special claim upon him.

'We Americans, in common with all English-speaking people the world over, lament his death, and share his glorious memory. I wish it were in my power to do what thee so kindly suggests, but I scarcely feel able to do justice, at this time, to the wonderful personality which for the past year has stood on the banks of the Nile, relieved against the dark background of the Soudan. I have been suffering from illness, and dare not undertake the eulogy of such a man with a feeble hand. Perhaps

it may sometime be in my power, as it is now in my inclination, to put my thoughts of him into metrical form. If I could reach the ear of Alfred Tennyson, I should urge him to give the world a threnody inspired by the life and death of one who has made not only England, but the world, richer for his memory.'

Sonnet by J. S. Blackie.—In the *Leisure Hour* for May, 1884, the following words were printed :—

Some men live near to God, as my right arm
  Is near to me ; and thus they walk about
Mailed in full proof of faith, and bear a charm
  That mocks at fear, and bars the door on doubt,
And dares the impossible. So, Gordon, thou,
  Through the hot stir of this distracted time,
Dost hold thy course, a flaming witness how
  To do and dare, and make our lives sublime
As God's campaigners. What live we for but this?
  Into the sour to breathe the soul of sweetness,
  The stunted growth to rear to fair completeness,
Drown sneers in smiles, kill hatred with a kiss,
  And to the sandy waste bequeath the fame
  That the grass grew behind us where we came.

A Friendly Tribute.—We cannot refrain from giving the closing sentences of the loving tribute by Mr. Barnes :—

'So ended a career as romantic and as noble as any that the modern world has seen. When the terrible tidings were made known England mourned for Gordon as she has seldom mourned even for

her heroes. His unworldly temper, his ardent faith, his magnificent energy, his sublime unselfishness, in all this there was something that captivated the heart of the nation; and it needed but the crowning glory of his death to evoke an expression of love and reverence to which there is hardly a parallel in our history. They who knew him best knew that his countrymen had obeyed a true instinct in placing him, even while he lived, beside those whose names are "on fame's eternal bead-roll worthy to be filed." With regard to Gordon's character there are no popular illusions to be dispelled. The more closely it is studied the deeper will be the admiration excited by his strength, his tenderness, his purity, his honour.'

Estimate of his Character.—If there has been any unduly exaggerated praise, there is likely to be also unfair depreciation of Gordon. From the known facts of his life let us try to form a just estimate of his character.

In devotion to duty, in manly self-reliance, in dauntless courage, in chivalrous honour, England has produced many men of the same heroic stamp. The Christian Church has in every age sent forth sons and daughters with spiritual gifts and graces as remarkable as those which moulded his inner life and prompted his works of busy beneficence. But it is difficult to name one in whom these two types of excellence—the man of heroic spirit and of saintly virtue—have been so wonderfully combined.

In some points of both these aspects of character he is surpassed by no example known to us in recent times. There never was a man in whom self in every form was more thoroughly subdued, and whose whole thoughts and labours were for the welfare of others. There never was a man who more earnestly strove to conform his life to the will of God and to the imitation of Christ according to the Scriptures. There never was a man more perfectly indifferent to human opinions or judgments when opposed to conscience or to the Divine law. For wealth, rank, office, and every social distinction he cared nothing, except as giving opportunity of doing good. Even from the love of fame — that last infirmity of noble minds — he was utterly free. His only ambition was to serve God and benefit his fellow-men to the utmost of his ability. Intensely loyal and patriotic, his sympathies were yet wide as humanity, and the best years of his life were given, as Livingstone's were, to the poor oppressed people of Africa. Much might be said of his many good qualities of head and heart—his geniality, his humour, his energy, his humility, his gentleness, his generosity,—but there would be risk of the exaggeration to which reference has already been made. Suffice it to say that all who ever came in contact with Gordon respected him, and that those who knew him best loved him most.

That there were faults and blemishes even in a character so pure and lofty is only what must be expected in human nature. But the failings appear

small in proportion to the virtues of the man. As to his religion, it must be admitted that his views of doctrine were not in all respects consistent or clearly stated; but the words of Dr. Alexander, the Bishop of Derry, as to the *Reflections in Palestine*, express well what will be the prevalent feeling:—'The General is not a profound theologian, but he is something far higher and better; he is an example of faith in the living God.' That he was at times quick in temper and brusque in manner; that he was too careless as to his own health and too regardless of social conventionalities; that he was not always cautious in forming his opinions, and somewhat tenacious in maintaining them,—these are really the chief faults we can name as to be avoided by those who would do well to emulate 'his noble and most Christian example.'

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